South America
NFHS Topic Proposal 2027-2028

Submitted by: Moselle Burke

<u>Two-Page Summary: South America</u>

Proposed Resolutions:

1. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with one or more South American countries.

2. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its economic engagement with one or more South American countries.

3. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with South America.

4. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with one or more of the following: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela.

Affirmative ground:

The Trump administration's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine has resulted in an aggressive, uncooperative foreign policy towards South America. Affirmative teams can depart from the status quo by establishing free trade agreements, removing tariffs, sanctions, or other barriers to trade, directly investing in developing industries in target countries, or building diplomatic ties. Advantage ground will be derived from countering China's increasing influence in the region, rebuilding partnerships with South American nations, and accessing resources that sustain the US economy. By leveraging the quid-pro-quo nature of the term "engagement," affirmative teams can consider policies that might induce target countries to revitalize democratic institutions, participate in international forums, or facilitate access to new resources and markets. The breadth of available target countries and policy mechanisms is constrained by affirmative teams' ability to prove the necessity of US action, which will rely on stable and predictable advantage ground.

Negative ground:

The relationships between South American countries and other regional and global actors are many and complex. The United States's deprioritization of cooperative diplomacy has allowed South American countries to pursue a more independent foreign policy. Many have welcomed

Chinese investment into their economies because China offers them better terms than the US. The BRICS alliance and Mercosur are globally relevant, regionally driven organizations that have gained a stronger foothold due to US withdrawal. These factors provide significant disadvantage and counterplan ground. Multiple South American countries will hold general elections soon before—or during—the 2027-2028 season. The target country politics DA will be a research-driven, fast-moving off case position that will shift throughout the year for countries holding elections or for those undergoing regime change.

Summary paragraph:

There has never been a policy debate topic focusing on the continent of South America. Topics focused on the Western hemisphere tend to gravitate towards debates about Central America and the Caribbean. As US relations with Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, and other nations begin to fray due to sweeping tariff policies and military intervention, a topic that analyzes non-military, cooperative foreign policy tools for the US to engage with countries in South America is both timely and politically important. Affirmative teams can invest in target countries' industries, negotiate trade agreements, end tariffs or sanctions, or leverage a quid pro quo policy to induce cooperation in democracy promotion or security. Negative teams can use the dynamic political environment in target countries to craft target country politics disadvantages, or defend the importance of rising regional powers like Brazil and Argentina maintaining their influence.

Proposal Narrative

History & Context of Problem Area

Since the 2013-2014 Latin America topic, the United States's relations with South American countries have changed significantly. Chinese and Russian engagement with the region have generated new geopolitical and economic risks. The second Trump administration has thrown US foreign policy in the Western hemisphere into a new age opposed to good-faith cooperation (Walt, 2026).

Despite the perennial importance of numerous South American countries to US foreign policy, no high school policy debate topic has ever specifically focused on South America. Venezuela's inclusion in the 2013 Latin America resolution was overshadowed by the prevalence of Cuba affirmatives. Topics focusing on cooperation with Latin America (1987-1988, 2013-2014) or reforms to immigration policy (1994-1995, 2018-2019) have in practice usually prioritized Central America and the Caribbean. South America's absence from policy debate is unfortunate: though much of the political conversation about Latin America centers around the US's nearer neighbors, there exist immense variability and depth in the policy considerations relevant to the South American continent that have been too often overlooked (Lowenthal, 2011).

The creation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 signaled to the rest of the world that the United States saw the Western hemisphere as its rightful territory, demanding that European powers end their colonization of the Americas (Office of the Historian, ND). As US power and influence expanded, the doctrine was reinterpreted in the early 20th century (the "Roosevelt Corollary") to justify a more assertive foreign policy including military intervention (Office of the Historian, ND). Under this doctrine, the United States became a hemispheric policeman, wielding its military power and economic dominance to compel states in Central and South America to conduct themselves in accordance with American interests. FDR's short-lived "good neighbor" policy focusing on partnership and collaborative economic development was interrupted by World War II, after which Cold War nuclear tensions resulted in Latin America and the Caribbean being used as a proxy for US-Soviet conflict (CFR, 2025). A series of flashpoints, including the Cuban Missile Crisis, steered US foreign policy in Central and South America back towards interventionism in the second half of the 20th century, a trend exacerbated by the War on Drugs and counternarcotics efforts (CFR, 2025). Beginning in the 1990s, the United States returned to a collaborative foreign policy focused on democratic reforms, economic engagement, and foreign assistance. The Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations all deepened partnerships with rapidly growing South American powers, leading to increased trade and a trend towards regional stability (CFR, 2025). Beginning with the first Trump administration, the US dramatically reversed course. Concerns over migration and the drug trade led to a harsher foreign policy in the Western hemisphere. Increased border security, mass deportations, sweeping tariffs, and transactional foreign assistance have starkly defined US policy for most of the past ten years (CFR, 2025). The Monroe Doctrine's purpose has shifted from maintaining influence and strategic leverage to bluntly using it to force concessions from neighbors and partners in an attempt to corral a region increasingly in search of international partnerships.

Today, South America's relevance to global politics is undeniable. The BRICS+ alliance continues to increase its influence and power, increasing the presence of non-US great powers in the Western hemisphere and facilitating the rise of Brazil as a regional superpower (Heine 2025, Dworkin et al 2026). China has increased its cooperation with South American governments, calling Washington's hemispheric influence into question (Roy, 2025). The shift rightward in many South American nations' politics has created points of alignment with the Trump administration, which the Shield of the Americas summit began to capitalize on (Reid, 2025). Peru and Colombia are among the recent countries whose electoral process has been pressured by Trump, resulting in the election of a far-right head of state in each (Stuenkel & Feinberg 2026). Tensions between neighboring countries in South America influence global markets and geopolitical shifts, making the region's internal politics highly important to the rest of the world (CFR, 2025).

Status of current policy

While the Trump administration has certainly displayed a greater focus on South America than previous administrations, its approach to dealing with other countries in the Western hemisphere represents a significant departure from the US's historical style. The Trump Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine indicates a return to "spheres-of-influence thinking" (CFR, 2026) where the United States attempts to achieve its policy goals through unilateral, often coercive action. The US's use of tariffs, threats, and military action all underscore this shift. Such an approach is intended to counter Chinese (and to a lesser degree Russian) influence in the Western Hemisphere (Galston et al. 2026). Despite a reduced focus on democracy promotion, the US has increased its involvement with elections in the Western hemisphere, contributing to a conservative swing in South America (Patterson 2026, Stuenkel & Feinberg 2026).

List of Probable Affirmative Cases

Affirmative teams will have ample ground. Mechanisms could include bilateral trade agreements, elimination of tariffs or sanctions, foreign direct investment, educational or industry exchange programs, or support for emerging industries. Affirmative teams may be able to leverage the quid-pro-quo nature of the topic to access diverse advantage internal links about security, migration, or democracy promotion. Depending on the selected topic mechanism, Affirmative teams will have access to different types of affirmatives. This section outlines several genres of affirmative cases accessible by proposed topic mechanisms.

Aff genre 1: Reverse America-first style tariffs and restrictions

The United States federal government should…

A. Eliminate Section 301 tariffs on Brazil

Tariffs on Brazil cause trade wars and are politically destabilizing

Harrison & Robertson 6/3 (Chase Harrison, Editorial Associate at the Americas Society/Council of the Americas Online, MPhil Comparative Politics at the University of Oxford where his work focused on populist parties in Central America and Mexico; Khalea Robertson, researcher and freelance journalist working primarily on topics of migration and diaspora within and from the Caribbean, "Trump in Latin America: Brazil Hit with Tariffs and Terrorist Designations" 6/3/2026 https://www.as-coa.org/articles/trump-latin-america-brazil-hit-tariffs-and-terrorist-designations) //MB

On June 1, the U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer announced that a Section 301 investigation will lead to a 25 percent tariff on Brazilian goods, unless Brazil resolves U.S. concerns by July 15. In the announcement, Greer said Brazilian trade policies and practices "are unreasonable and burden or restrict U.S. commerce." He acknowledged productive meetings between Presidents Donald Trump and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva but said trade disagreements remain unresolved. The investigation—initiated in July 2025—covered a wide swathe of issues ranging from digital trade to anticorruption enforcement to intellectual property rights. Still, if implemented, the 25 percent tariff would exclude more than half of U.S. imports from Brazil, including beef, coffee, aircraft parts, and minerals. During an OECD meeting today in France, Greer met briefly with Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira and expressed his intention to keep communication going. The 301 finding comes after a May 28 State Department announcement that two Brazil-based criminal organizations—the Red Command and the First Capital Command (PCC)— would be designated as Foreign Terrorists Organizations (FTO) starting June 5. The designations increase the legal tools and sanctions Washington can leverage against entities that support these groups. The PCC has been involved in operations laundering over $5 billion through fintechs and investment funds in Brazil's financial sector. Once added to the State Department list, these groups will bring the total number of FTO designations in the Western Hemisphere during Trump's second term to 17. Lula expressed frustration over both the USTR and FTO moves, describing them as politically motivated to support the interests of his opponents in the Bolsonaro family. In a social media statement, Lula said his country could respond with countermeasures and lamented that "U.S. participation in Brazil's exports reached its lowest value in history in Q1, 9.4 percent." Right-wing Brazilian presidential candidate Flávio Bolsonaro, who met with Trump in the White House on May 26, took credit for the decisions.

Tariffs on Brazil fail, undermine US influence, and spark trade wars that tank US exports

Smith 6/22 (Evan, BA Candidate Economics & Political Science at American University, Associate Policy Analyst Intern at the National Taxpayers Union, "Tariffs on Brazil Are Really Taxes on Americans" 6/22/2026 https://www.ntu.org/publications/detail/tariffs-on-brazil-are-really-taxes-on-americans) //MB

On June 1, 2026, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) concluded an investigation into a variety of Brazilian trade practices under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. The USTR proposed a 25% punitive tariff on Brazilian goods in response to Brazil's practices related to digital trade and electronic payment services, unfair preferential tariffs, anti-corruption enforcement, intellectual property protection, ethanol market access, and illegal deforestation. Section 301 creates the authority to investigate and impose trade sanctions against foreign countries that engage in unfair and discriminatory trade. Its goal is to secure the removal of foreign barriers and trade abuse. Unlike traditional World Trade Organization dispute settlement procedures, Section 301 allows the U.S. to pursue unilateral trade remedies, and was utilized to justify the trade war with China in 2018. Proponents of the tariffs believed that, if successful, the tariff threat should persuade Brazil to drop the harmful practices. However, as others pointed out, the tariffs will increase the cost of commerce and risk the possibility that Brazil might seek new trade partners, permanently redirecting trade away from the United States. **This is especially relevant as negotiations advance on the Mercosur-EU free trade agreement, which is set to remove tariffs on 91% of goods exported from the European Union to Brazil**. This culmination of increased tariffs along with new trade partners risks the possibility that Brazil will not act on the named practices, but rather shift permanent trade to foreign markets. Trump's history of tariffs on Brazil has been tumultuous. Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs, announced on April 2, 2025, sought to revitalize American industrialization and reduce trade deficits. Tariffs were imposed despite the fact that the United States had a $5.48 billion goods surplus with Brazil in 2024. The Liberation Day tariffs imposed an initial 10% flat tariff against Brazil under the authority of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). Trump increased the total tariff rate to 50% after imposing a 40% additional tariff on Brazil, citing the trial of Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil's previous president, as the reason for the expanded tariffs. On February 20, 2026, the Supreme Court ruled that IEEPA did not authorize the president to impose these tariffs. Following the ruling, the Trump Administration turned to different means to impose tariffs, including Section 301. On July 15, 2025, prior to IEEPA's repeal, USTR started an investigation under Section 301 into Brazil for unfair trading practices, which concluded on June 1. The investigation cited six factors supporting the tariffs: restrictions affecting U.S. digital platforms and payment services, preferential tariff treatment for certain trading partners, inadequate anti-corruption enforcement, inadequate intellectual property protection, illegal deforestation, and tariffs on U.S. ethanol exports. In addition, on March 12, 2026, USTR started an investigation into 60 countries, including Brazil, for failures to take action on forced labor, which concluded on June 2. Respectively, the Brazil-specific investigation proposes levying a 25% tariff on Brazil, and the second investigation proposes levying a separate 12.5% tariff. However, the actions include some exceptions in recognition of the benefits imports from Brazil provide to the United States. For example, the Brazil-specific Section 301 tariff excludes beef, coffee, metals, energy products, aircraft parts, and certain agricultural goods. The top five U.S. imports from Brazil are energy products (primarily oil), iron and steel, machinery, coffee, and aircraft parts. Despite U.S. imports from Brazil falling $2.587 billion between 2024 and 2025, Brazil closed 2025 with record global exports, approximately $11.6 billion more to the world than in 2024 as trade diversified and expanded. When the U.S. started levying tariffs, many nations sought to implement reciprocal tariffs or decrease imports from the U.S. This led to a decrease in overall demand on U.S. goods, and thus decreased U.S. exports. After the United State's trade war with China, China shifted soybean imports toward Brazil at the expense of U.S. farmers. China made up 37% of Brazil's trade between August and December, the period the U.S. tariffs on Brazil were fully implemented. As a result of this trade policy, China is likely to maintain Brazil as a primary trade partner even if trade tensions with the United States ease. USTR will hold a hearing on the proposed tariffs on July 6, as it continues to negotiate with Brazil in advance of the July 15 deadline to take action. Current law allows tariffs to be imposed without congressional approval. Legislation requiring congressional approval is the best means to provide oversight before tariffs can take effect. A host of legislation addressing this concern has been proposed. New legislation which increases congressional oversight over tariffs imposed by the executive branch remains a simple yet significant means of protecting American taxpayers and keeping prices low. The Section 301 investigation into Brazil's practices should be pragmatic and comply with U.S. law. USTR ought to utilize Section 301 to reduce unfair trade barriers, not to impose new, ongoing U.S. tariffs to disrupt trade with Brazil at the cost of American taxpayers.

B. Remove sanctions on Venezuela

Reducing sanctions on Venezuela is key to economic stability and democracy promotion

Cavanaugh 2023 (Cameron, Georgetown Security Studies Review, "Venezuela Sanctions: The U.S. Needs to Change its Goals" 2023 https://gssr.georgetown.edu/the-forum/regions/americas/venezuela-sanctions-the-u-s-needs-to-change-its-goals/)

The United States must change what it hopes to achieve by sanctioning Venezuela. Expecting sanctions will induce the Maduro government to step down is unrealistic. Even getting the Maduro government to conduct free and fair elections is unlikely due to the threat it could pose to their power. While the United States should not stop promoting democracy in Venezuela, it should moderate its goals. It is time for the United States to shift from coercing a return to democratic governance to improving Venezuela's economic and humanitarian situation. There are signs the United States is moving in the right direction. In November 2022, the Maduro government, the opposition, and the U.S. agreed to a deal where the U.S. and Europe would unfreeze up to $3 billion of the Venezuelan government's funds in order to fund health, food, and education programs in Venezuela. The UN will manage the money. The U.S. also agreed to lift some oil sanctions. Talks between the Maduro government and the opposition have continued regarding the funds, but progress has come in fits and starts. However, a joint statement from the U.S., UK, EU, and Canada following the deal called for "free and fair elections in 2024, the restoration of democratic institutions, and an end to the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela" and expressed a willingness to review sanctions if the Maduro government "makes meaningful progress in the announced talks to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people and bring them closer to a restoration of democracy." While the goals are virtuous and more moderate than regime change, they are still focused on democracy restoration and ignore the possibility that sanctions have contributed to Venezuela's increased authoritarianism and humanitarian crisis. The United States should work to leverage current sanctions to negotiate further deals related to economic and humanitarian relief. Such deals could include expanding the recent easing of oil sanctions to allow Venezuela to use that revenue to pay down other government debts as well. Currently, Venezuela can only use the profits to pay debt owed to Chevron. Another possibility is an oil-for-essentials program. Numerous groups have raised the oil-for-essentials option, which entails using oil sales to pay for basic goods, such as food and medicine. However, the United States should also be willing to consider unilaterally rolling back the oil embargo on PDVSA, government asset freezes, sectoral sanctions, and the other expanded sanctions introduced by the Trump administration if negotiations fail. The U.S. government should undertake a detailed analysis to determine (1) what goal is the United States hoping to achieve with sanctions, (2) what are the chances the United States will achieve these goals, and (3) will the benefits of sanctions outweigh the humanitarian and economic costs they impose on innocent Venezuelans? Unilaterally rolling back the expanded sanctions Trump introduced may be politically and possibly morally unpalatable due to the likelihood that Maduro would use sanctions relief to reward his cronies while continuing to violate human rights. However, it is worth asking whether continued human rights violations and greater economic prosperity for Venezuela, even if unevenly benefitting Maduro and his cronies, would be an improvement over continued human rights violations combined with poor economic conditions for all Venezuelans. The United States could instead focus on ramping up targeted sanctions against individuals, including government officials and entities directly involved in human rights abuses, drug trafficking, and terrorism. These could include the already-in-place individual sanctions against Maduro and the leaders of Venezuela's army and police but should not include sanctioning companies whose only transgression is dealing with sanctioned individuals or entities. Such sanctions will allow the United States to punish (and hopefully deter and reverse) such activity while reducing the impact on the Venezuelan economy and the public. Meanwhile, the United States can continue to promote democracy by providing monetary, logistical, and rhetorical support to the democratic opposition.

Aff genre 2: Diplomatic relations

The United States federal government should…

A. Increase its diplomatic engagement with Venezuela over democratic reforms

Cooperation with Rodriguez is key to a democratic transition – a consistent diplomatic signal is key to avoid adaptive authoritarian backsliding

Dib 3/11 (Laura Cristina, Venezuela Program Director at the Washington Office on Latin America, former Director of the Legal Clinic for Migrants and a member of the Migration Studies Center at the University of the Andes in Bogotá, Colombia, former lawyer at Venezuela law firm Consultores Jurídicos litigating human rights violation cases on both national and international scales, Bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies from the Universidad Metropolitana in Caracas, Venezuela, LLM in International Human Rights Law from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, "Two months without Maduro in Venezuela: Democratic transition or authoritarian adaptation?" 3/11/2026, https://www.wola.org/analysis/two-months-without-maduro-in-venezuela-democratic-transition-or-authoritarian-adaptation/) //MB

The latent risk: adaptive authoritarianism The worst-case scenario for Venezuela is the stabilization of a reconfigured authoritarianism: the preservation of absolute control of power under different faces, without a democratic transformation. Whether this scenario materializes will depend on several factors: the pressure exerted by civil society and democratic forces both inside and outside Venezuela; the convergence that may occur between the interests of the United States and those seeking a true transition to democracy; and the pressure that other influential actors, such as the private sector and European governments, may exert in the same direction. In this convergence of actors, the U.S.'s role is central. It can act as an accelerator of the transition or as a stabilizer of authoritarianism. The signals sent by the Trump administration have been mixed and difficult to interpret: the Secretary of State has spoken on several occasions about the need for a return to democracy and for elections to be held, while President Trump insists on how productive the relationship with Delcy Rodríguez has been and avoids talking about democratic transition. For its part, there is bipartisan understanding in the U.S. Congress of a crisis in Venezuela and a call for a genuine democratic transition. If the U.S. priority is merely economic relations and reducing migration, democratic transition could take a back seat. However, as Francisco Monaldi and other experts have explained, without institutional change, the hope of an oil bonanza will be unviable. Venezuelan civil society as the main promoter of the democratic transition After 26 years with the same party in power, amid a deep humanitarian crisis, a human rights crisis, and a crisis of the rule of law, the goal cannot be, a priori, a perfect democratic transition, but rather a viable and sustainable one. **Without sustained pressure, both internal and external, the current window could close, favoring a new authoritarian equilibrium**. As noted by academic and analyst Guillermo Aveledo, the return of political leaders and activists in exile could be a source of pressure on both Trump and Delcy Rodríguez, presenting them with a dilemma: if the de facto government in Venezuela opts for repression, it increases the political cost for Trump of continuing to call it an ally; while if Rodríguez tolerates their return, pressure will be exerted to open up civic space. This is the kind of dilemma that democratic forces must pose to the leaders of both countries. The democratic transition in Venezuela must be inclusive and rely primarily on the momentum of civil society and victims of human rights violations, who have resisted authoritarianism and continue to mobilize. This is the moment for the human rights movement and social movements, and it requires the support of international organizations that, for years, have documented the situation in the country and built international standards that will serve as a guide for the transition. Venezuela needs an agenda for the country's reinstitutionalization and continued work to open up civic space, while demanding that the US condition its foreign policy and economic flexibility on democratic openings and guarantees of transparency in the management of resources. A group of organizations has already published a list of 10 urgent actions to guide the transition in Venezuela. These minimal openings, which are only a starting point, should serve as a minimum acceptable route for the US government and the rest of the international community. In this fragile political moment, which stems from a highly questionable action by the US, the question is not whether something has changed in Venezuela, but whether that change will pave the way for democracy or end up stabilizing a new authoritarianism.

B. Expand student exchange programs with Brazil

Educational exchange is a key form of diplomatic engagement that solves soft power and counters China

Baer, Rubio, and Casaverde 25 (Julie Baer, Research and Learning Lead, Institute of International Education; Juliana Rubio, Associate Director, Americas Program, CSIS; Eitan Casaverde, Research Intern, Americas Program, CSIS. "A Partnership for Progress: Expanding U.S.-Brazil Student Exchange" 4/4/2025 https://www.csis.org/analysis/partnership-progress-expanding-us-brazil-student-exchange) //MB

Diplomacy and Soft Power

The United States and Brazil have had a diplomatic relationship since 1824. Today, Brazil is an increasingly critical partner for the United States as it seeks to address challenges in energy, food security, climate change, and multilateral cooperation. Trade also remains a central pillar of the relationship. In 2024, trade between the United States and Brazil reached an estimated $92 billion. Of this total, U.S. imports from Brazil accounted for approximately $49.7 billion—a trade surplus for the United States. Beyond economic cooperation, maintaining a strong political alliance is crucial as Brazil positions itself as a global power—especially as countries like China seek to expand their influence through initiatives such as BRICS, an intergovernmental organization comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. A key factor in sustaining the close U.S.-Brazil relationship is soft power, including educational exchanges, cultural diplomacy, and scientific collaboration, all of which play a vital role in deepening ties between the two societies. These connections not only foster mutual understanding but also reinforce long-term strategic cooperation. While the United States and Brazil share a strong tradition of educational collaboration, the rise of the BRICS bloc has introduced new complexities for alliances within the western hemisphere. Since its formation in 2009, BRICS has sought to challenge Western influence, with member states steadily expanding their geopolitical and economic reach. As a key participant, Brazil has strengthened its ties with fellow BRICS nations—particularly China and Russia—thereby broadening opportunities not only for trade and strategic cooperation but also for educational and cultural exchanges. These evolving partnerships reflect Brazil's growing role in a shifting global landscape, raising important questions about the future of its engagement with Western institutions. The stakes for countering Russian and Chinese influence in Brazil continue to rise, particularly given that Brazil is Russia's leading trade partner in Latin America—and with China's imports from Brazil reaching $89 million in 2022, more than double U.S. imports that same year. In recent years, education has emerged as a key pillar in strengthening Brazil's individual ties with both China and Russia. BRICS initiatives have underscored the growing opportunities for educational exchanges between Brazil and Russia, culminating in the establishment of the first Russian-Brazilian school near Rio de Janeiro. Similarly, Brazil and China have recognized the need to expand student mobility, implementing programs to encourage cross-country study. China, in particular, has advanced these efforts through initiatives to bring Brazilian students to the School of Foreign Languages at East China University of Science and Technology (ECUST) and offer Chinese instruction in Brazil through the Confucius Institute at FAAP Business School in São Paulo. These developments highlight the urgent need for the United States and Brazil to prioritize educational collaboration—not only to deepen bilateral ties and maximize shared opportunities, but also to counterbalance growing Chinese and Russian influence in Brazil's academic and cultural spheres. Furthermore, there is also strong global competition to attract international student talent. Recent years have seen an expansion of international students studying outside their home countries, according to UNESCO. The United States is the top host of international students worldwide, but it is notable that both Russia and China consistently rank among the top ten. Beyond BRICS, there are other countries actively recruiting large numbers of globally mobile students that have experienced robust growth, based on 2024 data from Project Atlas. Following the United States, the leading hosts include Canada (+28 percent), Australia (+21 percent), and the United Kingdom (+6 percent). In addition to these large hosts of international students, intraregional mobility within Latin America has also been increasing. For example, more Brazilian students studied in Argentina (24,219) than in the United States, based on 2024 data provided by the Argentinean Ministry of Education. As the United States looks to build upon its history of hosting the most international students in the world and to compete with other countries for top talent, there continues to be capacity across its nearly 4,000 colleges and universities, particularly at the undergraduate level, which is currently facing declining enrollments. With Brazilian students in the United States mostly studying in undergraduate programs, there is space within our institutions to host more of these often self-funded students.

Aff genre 3: trade agreements & investment

The United States federal government should…

A. Enter a comprehensive trade agreement with Argentina

Comprehensive trade agreements are key for the US to access global trade – Argentina solves Mercosur alignment

Grabow 26 (Colin Grabow, Associate Director, Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Policy Studies, "The EU-Mercosur Deal Shows What the US Is Leaving Behind" January 28 2026 https://www.cato.org/commentary/eu-mercosur-deal-shows-what-us-leaving-behind) //MB

This past weekend, the European Union signed a comprehensive free trade agreement with the Mercosur bloc comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. This marks the culmination of more than a quarter-century of negotiations. When fully implemented, the pact will create one of the world's largest free trade zones, encompassing more than 700 million people. At a moment when the United States is retreating into tariffs, trade threats, and ad hoc deals shaped by President Donald Trump's sensibilities, the rest of the world is pursuing openness through durable, rules-based agreements. Unless the Trump administration soon reverses course, the U.S. will bear the economic and geopolitical costs of that divergence for years to come. The scope of the EU-Mercosur agreement is impressive. Mercosur eliminates duties on 91% of EU exports, including tariffs as high as 35% on cars and spirits, while the EU will phase out tariffs on 92% of Mercosur exports. For EU exporters alone, removing these barriers is expected to save more than $4.6 billion per year in duties. Although quotas and safeguards were included to appease European agricultural interests, the agreement nonetheless represents a significant step forward in liberalizing trade between the two economic blocs. The economic logic is straightforward. By reducing trade barriers, signatories can play to their comparative advantages, focusing on what they do best. Flows of goods that leverage EU strengths, such as cars, machinery, and pharmaceuticals, will increase to Mercosur, while more raw materials and agricultural products will head in the opposite direction. Trade in services will also grow. The European Commission estimates that by 2040, tariff elimination and services liberalization will boost EU exports by roughly $57 billion and Mercosur exports by $10.5 billion. Beyond these wins for exporters, both sides will also benefit from lowered import costs. The contrast with the U.S. is stark. Rather than negotiating comprehensive trade agreements, Trump has settled for thin bilateral deals that offer only modest market access in return for limited relief from his sweeping tariffs. While the EU is securing broad, reciprocal access to Mercosur markets, the Trump administration has concluded just one agreement with a Mercosur country — Argentina — and even that amounts to a narrow framework rather than a full-fledged free trade pact. Many Argentine exports remain subject to Trump's misnamed "reciprocal" tariffs, and Argentina's commitments fall well short of the access the EU has secured. It is symptomatic of the broader U.S. approach. Similar framework-style deals were reached with the United Kingdom and Vietnam last year, yet both countries already participate in far more ambitious trade liberalization through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, concluded in 2023. As the U.S. seems content with higher trade barriers and limited deals, the rest of the world is positioning itself to reap the benefits of greater openness. And Trump may be inadvertently accelerating that process. On the heels of its Mercosur deal, the EU is reportedly moving rapidly toward a trade agreement with India. One reported reason for the urgency is New Delhi's desire to diversify its economic relationships after being hit with higher U.S. tariffs and political pressure over its purchases of Russian oil. Wariness over Trump's erratic trade policies may also have contributed to sealing the EU-Mercosur agreement after 25 years of negotiations. In her comments about the trade deal, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen warned that trade was being "weaponized" and noted the "dangerous, transactional" nature of current realities. The rebuke of Trump was thinly veiled. Simply put, other countries are opting to take their business elsewhere. As Harvard University economist Robert Lawrence put it, the president's policies are helping to "create a world without America." Trump's high-pressure tactics and unpredictability may generate headlines and burnish his image as a deal-maker. But they do little to advance U.S. prosperity. American manufacturers face higher input costs due to tariffs, while foreign competitors gain preferential access to fast-growing markets abroad. This is not savvy negotiation but economic self-harm. Great trade deals expand opportunity and establish frameworks that endure. They secure market access not just for today, but for decades to come. By that standard, the current U.S. trade record reflects contraction, not triumph. The EU-Mercosur agreement underscores a broader reality: the world is moving forward with or without the U.S. Countries seeking growth and influence are choosing openness over obstruction. If America continues to choose tariffs instead, it should not be surprised to find that the future of trade and its attendant benefits are shaped without it.

B. Increase investment in the lithium industry in Argentina, Chile, and Peru

South American critical minerals solve supply chains, military readiness, and vulnerability to trade wars

Solar 25 (Dr Carlos Solar, Senior Research Fellow, Latin American Security at the Royal United Services Institute, "Critical Minerals and the US–China Rivalry in South America" August 1 2025 https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/critical-minerals-and-us-china-rivalry-south-america) //MB

Strategic Alignment or Neutrality? China is Brazil's top trading partner and major investor in rare earths, lithium and infrastructure. The US on the other hand supports Brazil's defence industry via partnerships with Embraer and Amazon surveillance, among others, but is wary of Chinese access to dual-use minerals and strategic ports like in Rio Grande do Sul. Brazil's nuclear submarine relies on uranium and high strength alloys and faces export control sensitivities with both the US and China watching. The country's niobium reserves (90% of global supply) are strategically vital to US and NATO aerospace/defence firms. Washington could encouraged Brazil to 'de-risk' rare earth supply chains from China, but Brazil is balancing carefully. Its semi-alignment with both superpowers means that Embraer military exports (for example, the KC-390) may be affected by supply chain nationalism or export controls. Argentina's geopolitical pressure points are growing. China is investing heavily in lithium projects and nuclear power plants. But under President Javier Milei's the US is trying to reassert influence, including through IMF negotiations and lithium partnerships with US firms. The country's lithium triangle position puts it in the middle of US-China battery war, potentially affecting tech for military purposes. China recently offered JF- 17 fighter jets and military modernisation packages, which included systems needing rare earths, lithium and advanced alloys, but Argentina decided instead for the American-approved deal of acquiring F-16 jets from Denmark. Still, Argentina's access to Western defence tech could be limited if in the future it deepens security cooperation with China. Lithium control is a key battleground. Similarly, Chile is a global lithium heavyweight and copper superpower. China is a top buyer, but the US is increasing pressure to build a lithium supply chain away from Chinese processing, offering Chilean lithium a US tax break in 2024. Although Chile is not a major arms producer, the US may use its lithium leverage to influence foreign policy alignment, including military purchases. Chile uses US and European defence systems like the Leopard 2 battle tank, F-16 jet fighters and naval capabilities with technologies dependant on critical minerals which could create dependencies on Chile's own exports. China dominates Peru's mining sector, especially copper through companies such as MMG and Chinalco. The US is wary of Chinese control of Peruvian ports, railways and rare mineral extraction. But the news on naval modernisation with Hyundai eased US concern over military technology entanglement between Peru and China. Many of Beijing's weapons systems require copper, cobalt and rare earths, which can be mined in Peru but exported mostly to China for processing, locking Peru into China's tech loop.

List of Probable Negative Strategies

Negative teams will have a variety of available positions, ranging from topic generics to highly specific strategies for each target country. Since South America is the site of significant international involvement, negative teams will access disadvantages about competing spheres of influence (e.g. China or Russia SOI DA). The decline of US influence has allowed the BRICS alliance to gain a strategic position, and negative teams can read BRICS disadvantages that defend its rise. Counterplan ground includes multilateral institutions like BRICS, Mercosur, and the OAS as parties to consultation or alternative agents. In conjunction with Topicality debates over "engagement," negative teams will have the option of reading conditions counterplans as an alternative to plans that do not use a quid pro quo mechanism.

Additionally, the South America topic generates the possibility for well-researched and relevant target country politics disadvantages. Five of the twelve countries in South America—Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, and Peru—will either hold a general election within one year of the 2027-2028 season or hold one during the season. This means that incumbent administrations will seek to project strength and maintain popularity, and in countries where the leadership changes, the new guard will work to enact the agenda they campaigned on. All of these dynamics make for a vibrant and quickly moving political landscape that creates strong competitive incentives for debaters to regularly update their strategies.

Kritik teams will not lack relevant literature bases. The Monroe Doctrine is the subject of significant criticism, and the United States's attempts to increase its influence in South America are often in line with historical patterns of imperialism and colonialism. Scholars have criticized multiple strategic angles the United States has taken in the last few decades, ensuring a variety of reliable link ground. Standard kritiks on international topics like Capitalism and Security will be applicable to this topic.

Generic Target Country Politics DA Link

Alignment with Trump locks in far-right populist electoral success without achieving long-term concessions – Colombia proves

Stuenkel & Feinberg 6/25 (Oliver Stuenkel, Senior Fellow, Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Adrian Feinberg, James C. Gaither Junior Fellow, Democracy, Conflict and Governance Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "Trump Can Play Kingmaker in Latin America. He Can't Build Lasting Influence." 6/25/2026 https://carnegieendowment.org/emissary/2026/06/colombia-election-trump-kingmaker-influence-latin-america) //MB

In the election's immediate wake, with an extremely narrow margin separating the two candidates, Petro made unsubstantiated claims of Israeli cyber interference on de la Espriella's behalf. On Wednesday, Cepeda conceded defeat and will lead the opposition to the new president, who lacks a congressional majority and will struggle to enact many of his proposals. None of this will matter to Trump, who has celebrated another win in Latin America's so-called blue wave (or "orange drift," as James Bosworth has called it) as his own. The president's bluster is characteristically self-aggrandizing, but it stems from an unsettling reality: Across Latin America, the administration has largely succeeded in tilting the electoral playing field toward its preferred candidates. In Argentina, the White House conditioned a $40 billion bailout package on President Javier Milei's far-right La Libertad Avanza party (LLA) prevailing in the country's October 2025 midterm elections. That gambit seems to have paid off: LLA dramatically outperformed polling data despite low presidential approval ratings and opposition momentum in Buenos Aires Province. In Honduras, Trump took the same direct signaling approach later used in Colombia. In the days leading up to the country's November 2025 presidential election, he launched a Truth Social offensive in favor of conservative real estate magnate Nasry Asfura, which his opponent said helped Asfura claim a razor-thin victory. These were extraordinary interventions. Sitting U.S. presidents do not typically endorse candidates or coerce voters in foreign elections, especially not for such overtly partisan interests. Nonetheless, Trump has butted into all manner of democratic processes in Latin America. Beyond the elections in Colombia, Argentina, and Honduras, he has wielded tariffs and sanctions to disrupt the trials of right-wing leaders Jair Bolsonaro and Álvaro Uribe, and even undermined a civil society movement challenging President Nayib Bukele's abuses of power in El Salvador. Not all of these interventions have worked: Bolsonaro was ultimately convicted, and President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's approval ratings rose in response to Trump's attack on Brazilian sovereignty. Still, a new model of American power in the Western Hemisphere has emerged—one that is personalistic, episodic, and detached from any coherent regional strategy. Trump's interventions make no attempt to lock countries into U.S.-led economic or security architectures. They are transactional gestures, driven by loyalty tests and short-term leverage rather than long-term geopolitical goals, such as breaking ties with China. Unlike in Europe—where Trump's interventionism is explicitly ideological and rooted in a narrative of civilizational decline—his approach in Latin America is strikingly instrumental. It rewards personal alignment, not policy convergence.

Brazil Politics DA Link

Lula's approval relies on an anti-Trump posture – softening US policy towards Brazil undermines his popularity

Guimarães 25 (Thayz, nonresident journalist fellow in the Atlantic Council's Global China Hub and an international reporter for O Globo, "Trump's tariffs are giving Lula a boost and shifting Brazil's geopolitics" August 6 2025 https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/trumps-tariffs-are-giving-lula-a-boost-and-shifting-brazils-geopolitics/) //MB

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the seventy-nine-year-old Brazilian president, was once called "the most popular politician on Earth" by then US President Barack Obama. However, as his four-year term reached its midpoint at the start of this year, Lula's approval ratings had been on the decline, reaching the lowest level of his three administrations. The Brazilian economy is growing, and unemployment is falling, but the population is concerned about rising food prices and crime. In part, this decrease could be attributed to Lula's image frequently being linked by the opposition with that of a corrupt politician. Lula was arrested in 2018 as part of Operation Lava-Jato, a major operation conducted by the Brazilian Federal Police between 2014 and 2021 to dismantle a large money laundering scheme involving politicians and businessmen. Lula was released less than two years later after the Supreme Federal Court ruled that his imprisonment was unconstitutional. Two years later, the operation was closed after being the subject of several controversies. Lula's return to power in 2023 was marked by a broad democratic coalition, with the participation of various parties from across the political spectrum, amid several attacks by Bolsonaro against the Brazilian electoral system and fears that Bolsonaro was plotting a coup d'etat to remain in office. Following the inauguration of Lula on January 8, more than four thousand supporters of Bolsonaro assaulted the Presidential Palace, the National Congress, and other government buildings in Brasília. The Supreme Federal Court of Brazil classified the events as acts of terrorism. Nonetheless, opposition forces had seen their political fortunes improving late last year and early this year as they continued to paint Lula as tainted by corruption allegations. But Trump's tariff measures seem to be lightly reversing the downward trajectory of support that Lula was on. Data from public opinion surveys conducted after the announcement of Trump's tariff on July 9 indicate an improvement in the image of the Brazilian president, whose approval rating has now surpassed his disapproval rating for the first time since October 2024. According to the Atlas/Bloomberg survey released on July 31, 50.2 percent of respondents expressed approval of Lula administration, while 49.7 percent expressed disapproval. Lula's approval number had risen from 47.3 percent in June, in the same poll. Another survey in July, by Genial/Quaest, found Lula's approval rating increasing to 43 percent, from 40 percent in May. A clear majority of 61 percent of voters now see Lula as representing Brazil better than Bolsonaro on the global stage, according to Atlas/Bloomberg, up from 51 percent in November 2023. Trump appears to be a driving factor here, as 63.2 percent of Brazilians hold a negative view of the US president, according to Atlas/Bloomberg polling, an increase of 6 percentage points from April. The proportion of respondents with a positive view of the US president has fallen from 44 percent to 31 .9 percent over a six-month period. At the same time, Lula has sought to show he is standing his ground against the US president. In a July 17 national television broadcast entitled "Sovereign Brazil," Lula emphasized the importance of defending national sovereignty, multilateralism, and dialogue between nations, though he noted that Brazil and the United States are celebrating two hundred years of cordial diplomatic relations. "We expected a response, and what we received was unacceptable blackmail, in the form of threats to Brazilian institutions, and with false information about trade between Brazil and the United States," Lula told Brazilians. Lula followed this address with an interview in the New York Times on July 30 . "At no point will Brazil negotiate as if it were a small country up against a big country," he said. "We know the economic power of the United States, we recognize the military power of the United States, we recognize the technological size of the United States. . . But that doesn't make us afraid. It makes us concerned." With just over a year to go before the presidential election, scheduled for October 2026, Lula's government has been riding a wave of positive reviews amid threats from Trump. The Supreme Court has ruled that Bolsonaro is ineligible to run for office until 2030, citing allegations of abuse of political power and misuse of the media. Lula has already stated that, should it be deemed necessary, he will run for a fourth term.

China Sphere of Influence DA Link

The aff threatens Chinese investment and escalates tensions

Wright 26 (Thomas Wright, Brookings Commentary, "Redrawing global boundaries? The United States, China, and the viability of spheres of influence in the 21st century" February 18 2026 https://www.brookings.edu/articles/redrawing-global-boundaries-the-united-states-china-and-the-viability-of-spheres-of-influence-in-the-21st-century/) //MB

Thomas Wright

I understand the "Donroe Doctrine" to mean the administration's effort to assert U.S. primacy in the Western Hemisphere through tariff threats, political pressure, and discouraging partners from deepening ties with China. But by demanding loyalty without offering mutually beneficial economic development, and by using economic coercion against partners as its tool of choice, Trump is reducing America's appeal as a regional partner. China has become a more attractive economic partner for many countries that are looking to diversify away from the United States. Thus, the doctrine weakens America in the Western Hemisphere and globally.

We have already seen signs of this. In 2025 and early 2026, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva deepened Brazil-China ties through high-level talks with Xi Jinping, a state visit to Beijing focused on attracting Chinese investment in infrastructure and energy, and new commercial cooperation linked to Brazil's role in BRICS. Lula also announced reciprocal visa exemptions for short-term Chinese visitors in 2026, signaling a push to boost business travel, tourism, and broader economic integration between the two countries. Peru has also built very deep and broad economic ties with China, anchored in a long-standing free trade agreement, major infrastructure investments like the Chancay megaport, and significant Chinese involvement in mining and energy. Its dependence on China for trade is proportionally larger than Brazil's. Even the pro-Trump president of Argentina, Javier Milei, has abandoned his previously hostile approach to China and shifted toward pragmatism, which includes a visit to China later this year.

Globally, the "Donroe Doctrine" is shifting valuable military assets away from the Indo-Pacific to the Western Hemisphere, and it is inextricably linked to a foreign policy that is disinterested in strategic competition with China. This is also likely to benefit China and outweigh any advantage accruing to the United States by weakening Venezuela's ties to Beijing.

BRICS CP & BRICS Good DA

BRICS leadership solves global trade and middle power stability – that creates forums to de-escalate great power war

Heine 25 (Jorge Heine, CEBRI YEAR 4 / No. 13 / JAN-MAR 2025, "Brazil, the BRICS and Active Non-Alignment" https://cebri.org/revista/en/artigo/202/brazil-the-brics-and-active-non-alignment) //MB

ACTIVE NON-ALIGNMENT (ANA) AS THE WAY FORWARD It is in this context that Active Non-Alignment (ANA) emerges as an approach to foreign policy especially suited to dealing with a changing international order. ANA arose in 2019-2020 in response to a triple whammy hitting Latin America: the Covid-19 pandemic, the biggest economic downturn to hit the region in 120 years, and the pressures of the Trump administration to cut down on business with China. In reaction to this rather intimidating scenario, Fortin, Heine and Ominami (2020; 2021) proposed ANA as the best way to deal with it, taking a page from the Non-Aligned Movement of the sixties and seventies, but adapting it to the very different realities of the new century . This include a wealth shift from the North Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific, and a major increase in South-South trade (now above 50% of global trade, as opposed to a mere 20% in the sixties). In the new century , the diplomatie des cahiers de doleances of the old Third World has been replaced by the collective financial statecraft of the New South, with entities like the Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), the New Development Bank (chaired by former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff), and the Latin American Development Bank (CAF) (Roberts, Armijo & Katada 2017). ANA sets forth the need to put the national interest of the countries involved front and center and not give in to the pressures of great powers. ANA is not about neutrality , an international law concept associated with the role of third parties in armed conflicts, nor is it about equidistance between the great powers, as on some issues developing countries may be closer to the United States, and others to China. What it does mean is that countries refuse to side a priori and in toto with one or another of the great powers, proceeding to evaluate each issue on its merits instead. Its basic premise is that, although world order is very much in flux, and there are many moving parts, a key dynamic of it is, and will continue to be, the competition between the United States and China, one that has acquired renewed impetus in the second Trump administration. The question for developing nations is thus how to manage this rivalry . Given this great power competition between the United States and a competitor that describes itself as Communist, some refer to this as the Second Cold War (Sanger 2024). Yes, there are some parallels, but there are also significant differences. The Soviet Union was a superpower with large military , technological and ideological capabilities. That said, it also had a closed economy , and one far smaller than that of the United States. Thus, its trade, foreign investment and financial cooperation with what was then known as the Third World was limited. Conversely , today's China has a far more open economy , it is also the largest economy in the world measured in PPP terms and is projected to be the largest in nominal terms at the beginning of the next decade. This great power competition thus happens as a declining power faces a rising power. Under such circumstances, the hegemon will turn inwards, blame the rest of the world for its problems, and establish all sorts of barriers to trade, investment and people flows. In turn, the rising power, because it feels the need to show it is on an upward trajectory , will reiterate its commitment to an open economy and free trade, as well as to international collaboration. This is what is happening in the United States and China, respectively (Heine, Fortin & Ominami 2025). Yet, both powers feel the imperative to win the "hearts and minds" of governments and peoples across the world—one of them to show that it is still the hegemon, and the other that it is up and coming. This is what opens the door to Active Non-Alignment. The grand strategy of ANA is thus "playing the field", by which I mean sounding out which of these powers will provide them with the best terms on any given project, be it a port, a railway line, a dam or a credit line. And while the United States is a larger, more advanced economy than China scientifically and technologically , its public sector is smaller, and the U.S. government is less able to channel resources to international projects than the Chinese government. And, as we saw above, the tactic of ANA is hedging, meaning you cover your back and tread carefully in handling an uncertain and unpredictable international situation in which the possibility of nuclear war has once again raised its ugly head. And while countries like Colombia and South Africa have made it explicit, and others have not, across the Global South, from Brazil and Honduras in the Americas; Angola, Kenya and Mozambique in Africa; and India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam in Asia; among many other countries, ANA is being applied. It provides a guide to action, a compass to navigate the troubled waters of a world in the throes of change, and one in which Brazil is playing a leading role.

CONCLUSION In the mere span of little over a year, Brazil will have chaired and hosted the G20, the BRICS+ and COP 30. This is not happenstance, but, rather, the result of a foreign policy of long-standing that anticipated early on the rise of the South as a force to be reckoned with in world affairs and placed Brazil in a pole position within it. Brazil's refusal to take sides in the great power competition that is taking place between the United States and China has also contributed to this favorable positioning. The case of the BRICS is especially revealing, as its 2025 Rio Summit will take place just at the time when the G7 has imploded, and the narrative of Western unity has fallen apart. In such a fluid situation, a country like Brazil can and should play a key role in steering the BRICS group, which has been vital in stressing the developmental demands of the Global South, in the right direction. Rather than pushing BRICS towards a confrontational stance with the United States and Europe, as China and Russia seem at times to be tempted to do, Brazil should press towards finding common ground in addressing global challenges. In terms of global health, doing the needful for the world to be prepared for the next pandemic would be an obvious goal, for which the establishment of the Accord for Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness, a process on which the World Health Organization (WHO) agreed on April 16, 2025, would be an important step. On trade, steps to reinvigorate the World Trade Organization (WTO) would be welcome. On finance, rather than aim for a BRICS currency to replace the U.S. dollar, something that at this point is not viable, pressing for ways to increase intra-group trade in local currencies to the maximum extent possible is urgent. The current situation—in which the U.S., with less than a 15% share in global trade, can count on the exorbitant privilege of having the dollar as the de facto international currency, and weaponizing it for its own strategic purposes with unilateral sanctions that wreak havoc in the world economy—is unsustainable. As the preeminent Amazonian nation, Brazil also should have much to say on the way forward in the fight against climate change, something in which the issue of its financing looms large. In short, Brazil has its work cut out for it.

Conditions CP Advocate – Generic

South America's rightward shift means leverage works and we win Say Yes – QPQ isn't just transactional, it deepens shared commitments and solves the China advantage

Ellis 25 (Evan, Senior Associate (Non-resident), Americas Program at the Center for Strategic & International Studies, "Leveraging Latin America's Embrace of the United States" 11/4/2025 https://www.csis.org/analysis/leveraging-latin-americas-embrace-united-states) //MB

The impressively widespread U.S.-friendly disposition of the region, arguably even greater than during the first Trump administration, creates substantial strategic opportunities for the United States in regional multilateral bodies, as well as in economic, security, and other domains, yet with caveats and limitations that must be understood and carefully navigated. In recent months, U.S. threats of military action, tariffs and sanctions, and other measures against countries of the region have generally led them to cooperate with and temper their criticisms of Washington. That has particularly been the case for smaller states in Central America and the Caribbean, and those more economically tied to the United States, such as Mexico. As illustrated by the preceding paragraphs, however, receptivity to the United States has benefited greatly from the massive political shift in the region, a phenomenon largely unrelated to the new U.S. policies and tone, and arguably despite them. There is no guarantee, however, that this fortuitous coincidence of political conditions will persist, and reasons to worry that it may not. Historically, when right-oriented governing coalitions have failed to adequately address insecurity, corruption, and the economic needs of their populations, the momentum has shifted back to the left. The failure of the wave of pro-market, U.S.-friendly governments that came to power in Latin America in the 1990s to address the needs and expectations of their populations led to the "pink tide" of leftist regimes across the region in the early 2000s. Given the importance of delivering results, U.S. initiatives such as the bank swap and loans to stabilize Argentina's economy, security support to Ecuador, and the encouragement of U.S. technology investment in Paraguay and the purchases of its beef are strategically wise. Still, there are reasons to doubt that such support will be sufficient to allow Ecuador to overcome its crisis of public insecurity, or allow the Javier Milei government in Argentina to weather continued runs on the peso. The United States' current deep cuts in developmental assistance and democracy programs, however valid or not the reasons, further decrease important sources of U.S. leverage to help its friends succeed. The advance of China in the region, and the often-corrupting leverage of its expanding economic engagement, is another factor only partly addressed by the region's U.S.-friendliness. U.S.-oriented governments in the region often partly accommodate concerns about the PRC, including Taiwan-recognizing states such as Paraguay, Guatemala, and Belize, which persist in that posture despite being wooed and pressured by Beijing, not conducting significant military or other security engagement, and for some, like Costa Rica, limiting PRC presence in sensitive sectors such as telecommunications and space. Still, most are unwilling to reject export opportunities to, or loans and investment from, the PRC, despite the influence that comes from those expanding economic entanglements and the people-to-people relationships that come with it. The U.S. government currently has a historically unprecedented level of Latin America knowledge among senior Department of State leaders, complementing its increased attention to the region. Leveraging the historic opportunity provided by the region's current U.S.-friendly political configuration, however, requires a coherent approach, simultaneously strengthening collaboration on security, commerce, development, and institution-building, leveraging shared commitments to democracy and rule of law, people-to-people connections, and regional multilateral institutions. A principally transactional, ad hoc approach and a disposition to rely on economic and military coercion more than offering value and benefit will ultimately be counterproductive, particularly at a moment in which the PRC stands poised to exploit dissatisfaction with the U.S. approach. At the same time, however, returning to previously failed approaches built around imposing a partisan social agenda and a particular concept of democracy and rights would be equally misguided. If excessive reliance on coercion ultimately backfires, focusing on politically correct activities not optimized to U.S. partners' orientations and needs is equally destined to fail. For the United States not to squander the current bounty of U.S. receptive regimes in the region most directly connected to its security and prosperity, it should embrace an expanded, yet pragmatic and bipartisan partnership. This partnership is built around the concept that investing in a secure, prosperous region with strong and democratic institutions is fundamental to inoculating the region against criminals, terrorists, populist authoritarians, and extra-regional adversaries. In short, investing in the Western Hemisphere in a fashion that goes beyond improvisation and transactionalism is fundamental to putting "America First."

Conditions CP Advocate – Venezuela economic engagement

Regime change is key but only possible with US leverage – Rodriguez says yes to conditioning the plan on democratic reforms

Ramsey 6/15 (Geoff, nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, leading expert on US policy towards Latin America and has lived in and traveled regularly to the region for the last 15 years, "Updating the Democratic Transition Framework to chart a way forward in Venezuela" 6/15/2026 https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/democratic-transition-framework-chart-forward-venezuela/) //MB

To advance the US objective of a securing a prosperous, US-aligned, and democratic Venezuela, the United States should: Consult with all parties to release a 2026 Democratic Transition Framework for Venezuela. The Trump administration should put forward an updated framework that preserves the strengths of the 2020 proposal (laid out above) while adapting it to Venezuela's 2026 reality. This would help flesh out the administration's three-step approach by showing how Venezuela is meant to move from stabilization and recovery to a democratic transition. Doing so would also send a strong signal of certainty to US allies, partners, and potential investors about the progress that Washington would like to see in the near term. Clearly articulate to the Venezuelan government what progress it expects and how the US is prepared to incentivize this progress. Washington can and should construct a list of costly concessions that it expects to see from Caracas, and pair each of them with aspects of either sanctions relief or snapbacks to ensure a range of positive or negative incentives for compliance. The hard "asks" should be made up front. Use Treasury licenses and revenue oversight to enforce progress. In its sticks-and-carrots approach, Washington should use licenses, access to oil revenue and frozen funds, and other forms of economic relief to reward improvement in governance and concrete steps toward a transition—while making clear (and demonstrating, if need be) that licenses can be narrowed or revoked and sanctions can be reimposed in the event of noncompliance. The United States still has the tools necessary to shape elite incentives, and it should use that leverage to secure verifiable progress toward the end goal of an economically prosperous, US-aligned, democratic Venezuela. Engage more directly in facilitating lasting political agreements between the Venezuelan parties. For more than a decade, the international community has tried to organize dialogue and negotiation efforts. A reason (among others) for the failure in meaningful advancement is the lack of direct, coordinated US engagement with all parties around these talks. With the Trump administration now in close contact with all parties, it is in a privileged position to ensure negotiations can proceed on meaningful and durable reforms. Washington should lean into this advantage and shape the basis for a new agreement for economic improvement and democratic governance in Venezuela.

Neoliberalism K

US policy in South America masks neoliberal resource grabs – the aff culminates in exploitation and military interventions as a form of violent population management

Huberman & Amaral 25 (Bruno Huberman, Master's in International Relations from Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo & Rodrigo Augusto Duarte Amaral, Professor of the International Relations program at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, "Hegemony and Resistance: US Imperial Strategies in Latin America and the Middle East After the Cold War" MIDDLE EAST CRITIQUE 2025, VOL. 34, NO. 4, 581–606 https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19436149.2025.2578046) //MB

In Latin America, imperialist actions are less military but equally aggressive. The Trump administration imposed a 50% trade tariff on Brazil despite a US trade surplus, targeting the judiciary for restricting American big tech, disqualifying Bolsonaro from running again, and prosecuting him for his attempted coup after the 2022 election. Trump also imposed a 50% tariff on copper, severely impacting Chile, the world's largest producer. In addition, the US is suspected of having conspired in an attempted coup in Colombia to overthrow Gustavo Petro. In what may represent a turning point in US policy toward Latin America, Trump launched a military escalation against Venezuela, under the pretext of combating drug trafficking, portraying Nicolas Maduro's government as a 'criminal regime involved in large-scale drug trafficking' (White House 2025b). All countries are governed by left-wing leaders: Lula in Brazil, Boric in Chile, Petro in Colombia, and Maduro in Venezuela. At home, Trump used immigrant persecution to merge the 'wars' on drugs and terror into a broader project of eugenics and pacification within American society. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency has become a political police force targeting working-class Latinx communities and immigrants expressing solidarity with Palestine, including attempts to deport legal residents like Mahmoud Khalil, a Palestinian student at Columbia University. Mass deportations to countries of origin or to the Centro de Confinamiento del Terrorismo (CECOT) in El Salvador underscore the racialized nature of this persecution (Gallagher 2025). Trump has reinforced the link between drugs and terror by framing Maduro as a 'narcoterrorist' leader and pushing the Brazilian government to classify the PCC (Primeiro Comando da Capital) – a major drug trafficking organization operating from South America to Europe and Africa – as a terrorist group to justify the imposition of sanctions (Brito 2025). Trump also offered a $10 million reward for information about Hezbollah's financial operations in the Tri-Border Area between Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay (White House 2025c). This war on 'narcoterrorism' has already increased persecution of Arab and Muslim citizens in South America (Cheaito and Freixo 2025). In addition, the US has established a military base in Paraguay – the country's second in South America after Colombia – ostensibly to combat organized crime (White House 2025d). Trump's international conduct continues the US's historical pattern of dominance and intervention in the global periphery. The violent aggression against nationalist and socialist forces during the Cold War, followed by the promotion of neoliberalism through indebtedness and austerity, produced a profound social disarticulation that gave rise to new forms of organization among subaltern classes struggling for survival and freedom: drug cartels and Islamic groups. Following the Cold War, the neoliberal 'wars' on abstract enemies – drugs, terror, immigration, and corruption – have legitimized imperialist intrusions in the Global South since the end of the Cold War. These threats also justified the global construction of national security states that target racially subaltern populations through counterterrorism, surveillance, and border enforcement tactics (Kundnani 2021). The consequences are endless wars aimed at extermination, mass incarceration, and the super-exploitation of working-class peoples. The ultimate goal is to control the surplus populations generated by new global value chains and neoliberal austerity policies, in which war and security production become a vehicle for capital accumulation (Capasso and Kadri 2023; Neocleous 2011).

Democracy K

Western imposition of democratic reforms is a neocolonial tactic that locks in exploitation of the global South

Ramcilovic-Suominen 25 (Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen, Research professor based at the Natural Resources Institute Finland, “Capitalism as colonialism as capitalism (and the alternatives)” In A. Kangas, I. Gataulina, M. Poutanen, A. I. Rajala & H-E. Ventovirta (Eds.), Retheorising capitalism (pp. 198–218). Tampere University Press 2025 https://jukuri.luke.fi/server/api/core/bitstreams/efea21c2-d380-455c-848b-6bc6171c3823/content) //MB

Narratives of democracy have been important to justify invasion of countries that reject the West’s imposition and conditions of free/cheap access to resources and labour, including some—not all—Middle East countries. In cases of democratic states across Africa and South America, democratically elected leaders who mobilised the population towards economic liberation were assassinated and/or removed by military coups, covered up by the narratives of democracy, development, economic growth, and structural adjustment programmes (Hickel, 2017; Hickel & Sullivan, 2021). Effectively the Western states installed a neoliberal state-backed globalising economy, while clashing and smashing any movements for liberation from the hegemony of the West, under the guise of economic progress, democracy, and in some cases the narrative of fighting terrorism. In case of the most recent, and currently ongoing oppression no attempt is made to cover the intention, by this I mean the Israelian plausible genocide in Gaza that killed close to 30.000 people (as of March, 2023). The violence is streamed around the clock globally for nearly half a year at the time of writing, ignoring international rule of law and institutions, such as the United Nations and the International Court of Justice. This sends a message to anyone, but especially the emerging economies, such as BRICs and others, that the imperial capitalist order and global dominance of the West (the USA, UK, the EU, and its allies) is not to be questioned.

List of Proposed Resolutions

1. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with one or more South American countries.

2. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its economic engagement with one or more South American countries.

3. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with South America.

4. Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its diplomatic and/or economic engagement with one or more of the following: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela.

Discussion of wording considerations

The above resolutions reflect a variety of options resulting from three major wording decisions. Additional considerations, including notes on variety between definitions for specific terms and wording considerations common to all resolutions, can be found with their relevant definitions in the following section.

A. Mechanism. A majority of proposed resolutions use the mechanism “diplomatic and/or economic engagement.” This is in line with the wording of the 2016-2017 China topic. Inclusion of both types of engagement is intended to minimize Topicality debates over whether the affirmative’s mechanism falls within “diplomatic engagement” *instead of* “economic engagement” or vice versa. Diplomatic engagement mechanisms include promoting target state membership in multilateral partnerships, recognizing governments whose legitimacy is contested, or taking steps to normalize relations and facilitate cooperation across multiple issue-areas. Economic engagement includes bilateral trade, investment, and financing. The proposed mechanisms specify diplomatic and economic engagement to clearly distinguish the topic from military or cultural engagement, a distinction most clearly drawn by the Resnick evidence. If the committee prefers a narrower mechanism, Resolution 2 proposes that “economic engagement” be selected due to its clearer definition as trade, investment, and financing.

B. Region. Resolutions 1 and 2 propose the phrasing “one or more South American countries” in contrast to Resolution 3, which proposes “South America.” The difference in phrasing determines whether the resolution emphasizes the bilateral nature of engagement or the regional focus of the topic. The inclusion of “countries” or an equivalent term intentionally excludes territories, unrecognized governments, or any entities that are not sovereign states. “South America” permits engagement with non-governmental bodies or supranational institutions, which may be mitigated by “diplomatic and/or economic engagement” implying bilateral (and thus inter-governmental) cooperation, but the limit is less clear.

C. Yes/No List. It is this proposal’s recommendation that the resolution not include a limited list of target countries. Omission of a list allows the topic to more flexibly adapt to unforeseeable geopolitical events during the course of the season that could render one or more countries far less workable. Concerns regarding breadth are addressed in the *Balance* section of the NFHS criteria discussion. Should the committee prefer more narrowly scoped topic, Resolution 4 includes a preliminary working list of six countries. Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia are the three countries with the highest GDP in South America (World Bank 2026), and they are key regional powers. Chile and Peru are included for their key role in critical minerals industries. Venezuela is included due to its geopolitical significance and unique relationship to the United States.

Definitions

As with each recent resolution that has used the term "engagement," a key topicality debate is whether or not engagement mechanisms must demand a specific concession from a target country. While most definitions agree that engagement is nearly always aimed at changing the behavior of a target state, interpretations vary in whether engagement strategies may be, or must be, conditional on achieving a specific concession from a target state.

Diplomatic & Economic Engagement

Resnick 2001 – Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yeshiva University (Evan, Journal of International Affairs, "Defining Engagement" v54, n2, political science complete)

A REFINED DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT

In order to establish a more effective framework for dealing with unsavory regimes, I propose that we define engagement as the attempt to influence the political behavior of a target state through the comprehensive establishment and enhancement of contacts with that state across multiple issue-areas (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, cultural). The following is a brief list of the specific forms that such contacts might include:

DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS

Extension of diplomatic recognition; normalization of diplomatic relations

Promotion of target-state membership in international institutions and regimes

Summit meetings and other visits by the head of state and other senior government officials of sender state to target state and vice-versa

MILITARY CONTACTS Visits of senior military officials of the sender state to the target state and vice-versa Arms transfers Military aid and cooperation Military exchange and training programs Confidence and security-building measures Intelligence sharing

ECONOMIC CONTACTS

Trade agreements and promotion

Foreign economic and humanitarian aid in the form of loans and/or grants

CULTURAL CONTACTS Cultural treaties Inauguration of travel and tourism links Sport, artistic and academic exchanges(n25)

Engagement is an iterated process in which the sender and target state develop a relationship of increasing interdependence, culminating in the endpoint of "normalized relations" characterized by a high level of interactions across multiple domains. Engagement is a quintessential exchange relationship: the target state wants the prestige and material resources that would accrue to it from increased contacts with the sender state, while the sender state seeks to modify the domestic and/or foreign policy behavior of the target state. This deductive logic could adopt a number of different forms or strategies when deployed in practice.(n26) For instance, individual contacts can be established by the sender state at either a low or a high level of conditionality.(n27) Additionally, the sender state can achieve its objectives using engagement through any one of the following causal processes: by directly modifying the behavior of the target regime; by manipulating or reinforcing the target states' domestic balance of political power between competing factions that advocate divergent policies; or by shifting preferences at the grassroots level in the hope that this will precipitate political change from below within the target state.

This definition implies that three necessary conditions must hold for engagement to constitute an effective foreign policy instrument. First, the overall magnitude of contacts between the sender and target states must initially be low. If two states are already bound by dense contacts in multiple domains (i.e., are already in a highly interdependent relationship), engagement loses its impact as an effective policy tool. Hence, one could not reasonably invoke the possibility of the US engaging Canada or Japan in order to effect a change in either country's political behavior. Second, the material or prestige needs of the target state must be significant, as engagement derives its power from the promise that it can fulfill those needs. The greater the needs of the target state, the more amenable to engagement it is likely to be. For example, North Korea's receptivity to engagement by the US dramatically increased in the wake of the demise of its chief patron, the Soviet Union, and the near-total collapse of its national economy.(n28)

Third, the target state must perceive the engager and the international order it represents as a potential source of the material or prestige resources it desires. This means that autarkic, revolutionary and unlimited regimes which eschew the norms and institutions of the prevailing order, such as Stalin's Soviet Union or Hitler's Germany, will not be seduced by the potential benefits of engagement.

This reformulated conceptualization avoids the pitfalls of prevailing scholarly conceptions of engagement. It considers the policy as a set of means rather than ends, does not delimit the types of states that can either engage or be engaged, explicitly encompasses contacts in multiple issue-areas, allows for the existence of multiple objectives in any given instance of engagement and, as will be shown below, permits the elucidation of multiple types of positive sanctions.

While the Resnick evidence is far from novel, it has emerged repeatedly in topicality debates as one of the highest standards for interpreting the term “engagement”. As of the time of writing, Resnick’s “Defining Engagement” has been cited in 171 other scholarly works, including 50 published in or after 2022. It remains an influential and reliable source for defining relevant terms of art.

Diplomatic engagement, necessarily being diplomacy, falls within the purview of the Department of State. For FY2026, the State department has included the following in its appropriations for diplomatic engagement. Teams can certainly use this as a guideline for topical mechanisms under the phrasing “diplomatic engagement.” The DOS definition differs from the Resnick definition in its inclusion of Education and Cultural Exchange programs under appropriations for “Diplomatic Engagement”—Resnick defines educational exchanges as cultural engagement. While this paper does not include significant consideration of counterplan ground accessed via non-DOS departments enacting the plan (in line with the DOS counterplan being a core generic on the NATO Security Cooperation topic), this is a potential avenue for a topic generic. The included screenshot in the second DOS definition has been minimized for brevity, but the full text can be accessed at the hyperlink.

Diplomatic Engagement

Department of State 25 (US Department of State, "2025 Agency Financial Report" December 2025 https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/DOS-AFR-2025-508.pdf) //MB

The Bureau of Budget and Planning manages the Diplomatic Engagement portion of the 2025 budget: $14.7 billion in new fiscal year appropriated budget authority (net of rescissions and including the $250 million supplemental for IBWC), $14 billion in other revenue, and $16 billion in prior year funding that remained available for obligation in 2025. The 2025 Diplomatic Engagement budget and prior year supplementals funded the Administration's foreign policy priorities, including:

The Department's domestic and overseas operations, covering over 90 percent of the workforce and protection of the Department's people, property, and data. Strengthen U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions to promote peace, sovereignty, security, effective reforms while refocusing these organizations on their core mission of fostering global stability. Advance the Department's border security mission through issuing passports, visas, and other services to promote the welfare of American citizens at home and abroad. Strengthen legal migration pathways through rigorous visa process vetting, safeguards the integrity of U.S. borders, and enhances passport services. Safeguarding communities on our southern and northern border through treaty-based bilateral commissions with Mexico and Canada.

Diplomatic Engagement

Department of State 25 (US Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification: Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Fiscal Year 2026" published 2025 https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FY-2026-State-CBJ-.pdf) //MB

DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS

($ in thousands)	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Request	Change from FY 2025 Estimate
Administration of Foreign Affairs	**11,171,671**	**12,579,892**	**10,846,025**	**(1,733,867)**
State Programs	**8,480,226**	**9,888,447**	**8,569,229**	**(1,319,218)**
Diplomatic Programs	**9,413,107**	**9,413,107**	**8,569,529**	**(843,578)**
Ongoing Operations	5,599,400	5,599,400	4,831,873	(767,527)
Additional Appropriations - Ongoing Operations [1]	*110,000*	-	-	-
Worldwide Security Protection	**3,813,707**	**3,813,707**	**3,737,656**	**(76,051)**
Additional Appropriations - Worldwide Security Protection [2]	*100,000*			
Capital Investment Fund	**389,000**	**389,000**	**399,700**	**10,700**
Consular Border Security Programs	**(1,321,881)**	**86,340**	**(400,000)**	**(486,340)**
of which, Passport Application and Execution Fee (PAEF) Revenue	(469,541)	(491,000)	(517,000)	(26,000)
of which, Passport Application and Execution Fee (PAEF) Spending Authority	50,000	50,000	517,000	467,000
of which, Rescission of Unobligated Balances	(902,340)	(375,000)	(775,000)	(400,000)
of which, Restoration of Previously Withheld Unobligated Balances	-	902,340	375,000	(527,340)
Embassy Security, Construction, and Maintenance - Net of Rescissions	**1,733,821**	**1,733,821**	**2,006,692**	**272,871**
Ongoing Operations	902,615	902,615	812,836	(89,779)
Worldwide Security Upgrades	1,055,206	1,055,206	1,193,856	138,650
ESCM Prior Year Rescissions/Transfers	(224,000)	(224,000)	-	224,000
Other Administration of Foreign Affairs	**957,624**	**957,624**	**270,104**	**(687,520)**
Office of Inspector General	131,670	131,670	134,400	2,730
Additional Appropriations - OIG [3]	*12,000*	-	-	-

13

($ in thousands)	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Request	Change from FY 2025 Estimate
Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs	741,000	741,000	50,000	(691,000)
Representation Expenses	7,415	7,415	7,415	-
Protection of Foreign Missions and Officials	30,890	30,890	30,890	-
Emergencies in the Diplomatic and Consular Service	8,885	8,885	8,885	0
Additional Appropriations - EDCS [4]	*50,000*	-	-	-
Buying Power Maintenance Account	-	-	-	-
Repatriation Loans Program Account	1,800	1,800	2,550	750
Payment to the American Institute in Taiwan	35,964	35,964	35,964	-
International Organizations	**2,910,859**	**2,777,596**	**263,803**	**(2,513,793)**
Contributions to International Organizations	1,543,452	1,543,452	263,803	(1,279,649)
Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities	1,367,407	1,234,144	-	(1,234,144)
International Commissions (Function 300)	**302,773**	**224,723**	**183,023**	**(41,700)**
International Boundary and Water Commission - S&E	64,800	64,800	64,800	-
International Boundary and Water Commission - Construction	156,050	78,000	50,300	(27,700)
Additional Appropriations - IBWC Construction [5]	-	*250,000*	-	*(250,000)*
American Sections	**16,204**	**16,204**	**13,204**	**(3,000)**
International Joint Commission	10,881	10,881	10,881	-
International Boundary Commission	2,323	2,323	2,323	-
North American Development Bank	3,000	3,000	-	(3,000)
International Fisheries Commissions	**65,719**	**65,719**	**54,719**	**(11,000)**
Related Programs	**359,000**	**359,000**	**-**	**(359,000)**

14

($ in thousands)	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Request	Change from FY 2025 Estimate
The Asia Foundation	22,000	22,000	-	(22,000)
National Endowment for Democracy	315,000	315,000	-	(315,000)
East-West Center	22,000	22,000	-	(22,000)
Special and Trust Funds	**1,254**	**1,386**	**745**	**(641)**
Center for Middle Eastern-Western Dialogue	104	168	-	(168)
Eisenhower Exchange Fellowship Program	335	304	0	(304)
Israeli Arab Scholarship Program	71	170	-	(170)
International Chancery Center	744	744	745	1
Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund (non-add)	*158,900*	*60,000*	*60,000*	-
TOTAL, Department of State Appropriations	**14,745,557**	**15,942,597**	**11,293,596**	**(4,649,001)**
TOTAL, Additional Appropriations	**272,000**	**250,000**	**0**	**(250,000)**
GRAND TOTAL, Department of State Appropriations	**15,017,557**	**16,192,597**	**11,293,596**	**(4,899,001)**

[1] $60 million in FY 2024, Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. B, P.L. 118-50)
$50 million in FY 2024, Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. A, P.L. 118-50)
[2] $100 million in FY 2024, Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. A, P.L. 118-50)
[3] $8 million in FY 2024, Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. B, P.L. 118-50)
$4 million in FY 2024, Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. A, P.L. 118-50)
[4] $50 million in FY 2024, Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. A, P.L. 118-50)
[5] $250 million in FY 2025, Supplemental Appropriations IBWC Construction, the American Relief Act, 2025 (Div. P.L. 118-158)

15

The clearest definitions of economic engagement identify its primary tools as trade, investment, and financing.

Economic Engagement

Runde et al 18 (Daniel F Runde, senior vice president and director of the Project on Prosperity and Development and holds the William A. Schreyer Chair in Global Analysis at CSIS; Romina Bandura, senior fellow with the Project on Prosperity and Development and the Project on U.S. Leadership in Development at CSIS; Owen Murphy, program coordinator for the CSIS Project on Prosperity and Development and Project on U.S. Leadership in Development; "Renewing U.S. Economic Engagement with the Developing World" November 2018 https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190820_RundeBanduraMurphy_USEconomyEngagementDevelopingWorld_v5.pdf) //MB

The development landscape has dramatically changed in the past 25 years. A set of countries once considered "poor" or "third world" have become more prosperous, freer, and healthier.1 These countries seek international economic engagement in the form of infrastructure investments, increased trade, and exchanges in science, technology, and innovation. As countries move up the prosperity ladder, they will need less foreign aid (i.e official development assistance – ODA) and demand more participation as equal partners in a diversified global economy. Yet the way that the United States engages with these countries has not caught up to this new reality. As a result, the U.S. sphere of economic influence with developing countries has weakened. The United States is no longer the major player for developing countries when it comes to trade, investments, and financing. In 2006, the United States was the principal trade partner for close to 130 nations. Just ten years later, this number had dropped to 76. 2 China has taken the United States' place and has become the top trading partner for 124 countries. In Africa, where a large share of the trade and investment opportunities lie, the United States has lost significant ground and is stepping away from the region. 3 In 2016, U.S. exports to Africa hit a 10-year low, with sub-Saharan Africa now accounting for only 0.9 percent of total U.S. exports.4 "Rather than looking at many developing countries as simply recipients of aid, the United States must look at them as emerging or even emerged partners who desire deeper relationships built around trade, investment, and economic growth."5 Many of these countries are existing or prospective U.S. allies and have strong consumer markets that U.S. companies can tap into. According to the American Academy of Diplomacy, ninety-five percent of the world's consumers are located outside the United States, and some of these consumers would directly support businesses and job creation in the United States. 6 The United States has a foreign assistance approach and toolbox that is outdated and has been reactive at best to the changes in the developing world. The United States must think more strategically about how to best engage the developing world, use foreign aid as a catalyst to attract private capital to these countries, and help level the playing field with other foreign players through anticorruption efforts, procurement training, and trade facilitation. The United States needs an international economic strategy to engage with prospering developing countries as true economic partners. The United States needs to regain its economic leadership in the world. If the United States does not revamp its economic strategy towards the developing world, 50 or so countries will go from fourth to fifth gear thanks not to U.S. but Chinese financing.

Interestingly, some definitions of engagement argue that engagement with a foreign government must involve recognition of that government's legitimacy. This raises important questions for engagement with Venezuela, whose government may not be recognized as legitimate during the 2027-2028 season, in part depending on the Trump administration's decision of whether or not to pursue regime change.

Engagement

Sheen 2002 – associate professor at the Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University (Seongho, The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis, Vol. XIV, No. 1, Spring 2002, "US Strategy of Engagement During the Cold War and Its Implication for Sunshine Policy" http://www.kida.re.kr/data/2006/04/14/seongho_sheen.pdf)

Can the sunshine policy really bring positive changes within the North Korean regime and peace to the Korean peninsula? The logic behind Kim Dae-jung's policy is a refinement of one of the major strategies of economic statecraft and military competition. In his discussion of US economic statecraft towards the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Michael Mastanduno provides a useful framework for understanding President Kim's engagement policy towards the North. In general, engagement promotes positive relations with an enemy as a means of changing the behavior or policies of a target government. It accepts the legitimacy of that government and tries to shape its conduct. Engagement also requires the establishment and continuance of political communication with the target. In engaging the enemy, the state sees political polarization with target or isolation of the target country as undesirable.

There is general consensus that engagement must imply the creation or maintenance of sustainable, long-term relationships with a target state.

Engagement

Wallin 13 (Matthew, CEO of the American Security Project, has led ASP's research on public diplomacy and strategic communications since 2011, Master's in Public Diplomacy from the University of Southern California, former staff at the U.S. Department of State's press office, assisting with the daily State Department press briefings and answering media inquiries on official U.S. foreign policy. "Engagement: What does it Mean for Public Diplomacy?" 6/11/2013 https://www.americansecurityproject.org/engagement-what-does-it-mean-for-public-diplomacy/) //MB

If anything, using the term engagement can sometimes provide the user with a perceived ability to forgo one of the most difficult parts of public diplomacy—that is demonstrating metrics which indicate whether or not one's efforts are succeeding at influencing the target audience. In other words, the user of "engagement" may feel as though they needn't actually explain the effects of their activities because they are "engaging" by nature of the word. This is why analyzing the content of engagement is vital. Is a forum post engaging? Is a billboard engaging? Is a TV advertisement engaging? This can be difficult to determine, and cannot be assumed. What practitioners and policymakers should understand is that core of public diplomacy is not really about **undefined** "**engagement**"—it is about building relationships. By focusing on relationship-building, and eliminating engagement from the PD lexicon, practitioners and policymakers may begin to better employ the thinking that is required for better public diplomacy. Rather than speaking about PD in abstract terms, emphasizing relationship-building forces those participating in the PD debate to consider the types of activities that are necessary to gain influence. Rather than counting one-off twitter postings as engagement, practitioners should focus on substantive, comprehensive and continuing dialogue. One of the biggest problems in public diplomacy is that few understand what it is, and the terminology itself doesn't help. Soft power, public diplomacy, and engagement all need to be explained in order to be understood. These terms have no immediate recognition like war, peace, freedom or competition. For this reason, perhaps "building relationships" should be used more often by those exploring or explaining the subject. In the end, "building relationships" gets to the core of how public diplomacy should be geared, and serves to remind practitioners of the types of efforts needed to exert non-coercive influence.

Some authors distinguish between engagement, which implies dialogue and building coalitions without concrete demands, and other strategies, which attempt to push target states towards some action.

Engagement

Evans & Steven 08 (Alex Evans, non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, former special adviser to Hilary Benn at the Department for International Development from 2003 to 2006; David Steven, managing director of River Path Associates, a consultancy that has worked with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development, the UN and the World Bank. "TOWARDS A THEORY OF INFLUENCE FOR TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY FOREIGN POLICY: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD" published in "ENGAGEMENT: Public Diplomacy in a Globalised World" eds. Jolyon Welsh and Daniel Fearn, first published 2008 https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/useruploads/u26739/Engagement_FCO.pdf) //MB

It is helpful to think of four distinct ways in which these goals can be achieved. Together, they form a typology of generic influencing strategies (see Figure 4.2). Engagement strategies are public diplomacy's bread and butter. For most important international challenges, a response of sufficient scale is lacking. Effort is therefore needed to energise the debate, thus increasing the attention paid to an issue, developing solutions and increasing capacity to respond. Public diplomacy's task is to create analytical resources, promote dialogue and build coalitions. This requires substantial resources. Public diplomats must find multiple ways to initiate, feed and broaden a conversation – and sustain it until a tipping point is reached.

What, though, if a broad range of actors is engaged in an issue, but this is not leading towards a solution? What if the conversation has become stuck at some point short of resolution? In this case, a shaping strategy is needed to focus the conversation and drive it towards a consensus that can support action. Shaping strategies involve a deliberate attempt to 'reframe' the debate. Public diplomacy's task is therefore to inject new content, change the composition of key networks, or do both simultaneously – given that a new narrative is the best way to bring new voices into a debate. Shaping strategies focus on solutions not problems, and aim to achieve a particular result. Public diplomacy, in other words, takes on a campaigning guise.

Disruptive strategies must be employed when a consensus has been reached on an issue but a government finds this consensus opposed to its interests (or what it interprets as the wider interest). This is a more confrontational form of public diplomacy. The aim is to marginalise or co-opt opposing interests, or fundamentally to shift the terms of a debate. The pre-existing consensus must be dissolved or rendered irrelevant, clearing space in which a new one can be constructed. Disruption demands discipline and tolerance for risk. It is not easy to force a change in the rules of the game, especially from a position in the middle of play.

Finally, we reach destructive strategies which are deployed against declared adversaries. They are used only when further debate is not seen as an option. The aim of public diplomacy is to deny an opponent space, sow dissent and encourage defection from his ranks. This is public diplomacy as propaganda or psy-ops. Deceptive tactics can be used to confuse and undermine the adversary. Alternatively, we may see a refusal to accept that a group has any legitimacy, as it is ignored, belittled and otherwise marginalised.

All resolutions included in this paper use the preposition “with” to indicate the object of the resolution. This aligns with the most recent “engagement” resolution (China 2016-2017) but differs from the 2013-2014 Latin America resolution, which used “toward.” The choice of “with” is intentional, since it preserves a greater degree of ambiguity in whether affirmative ground is solely unilateral. “Toward” indicates that the United States is acting on its own, without an intrinsic process of negotiation or collaboration. “With” emphasizes the bilateral, cooperative nature of topical affirmatives.

With

Merriam-Webster ND (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, “with” https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/with) //MB

<u>with</u>

preposition

2a—used as a <u>function word to indicate a participant in an action</u>, transaction, or arrangement

works with his father

a talk with a friend

got into an accident with the car

Toward

Merriam-Webster ND (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, “toward” https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/toward) //MB

<u>toward</u>

preposition

1 : <u>in the direction of</u>

driving toward town

2a: along a course leading to

a long stride toward disarmament

b: <u>in relation to</u>

an attitude toward life

Latin America is inclusive of, but not limited to, South America. This proposal intentionally focuses on South America and excludes Central America and the Caribbean.

South America includes 12 countries

Countries of South America

Britannica ND (Britannica Editors, "list of countries in Latin America" https://www.britannica.com/topic/list-of-countries-in-Latin-America-2061416) //MB

North and Central America

Belize Costa Rica El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Mexico Nicaragua Panama

South America

Argentina Bolivia Brazil Chile Colombia Ecuador French Guiana (département of France) Guyana Paraguay Peru Suriname Uruguay Venezuela

Caribbean

countries

Cuba Dominican Republic Haiti

dependencies and constituent entities

Guadeloupe Martinique Puerto Rico Saint-Barthélemy Saint-Martin

South America

Countries of the World 26 (Countries of the World, online repository of information, "List of countries in South America" current as of 6/26/2026 https://www.countries-ofthe-world.com/countries-of-south-america.html) //MB

In total, there are 12 independent countries and three dependent territories in South America, with a total population of 438,243,540 as of June 26, 2026. South America occupies the entire southern part of the supercontinent of the Americas and is the fourth-largest continent on Earth after Asia, Africa, and North America, with a total land area of 17,840,000 km2 (6,890,000 mi2). The South American continent is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west, southwest, and northwest; by the Atlantic Ocean to the east, southeast, and northeast; and by the Caribbean Sea to the north. In the south, the Drake Passage separates South America from Antarctica. In the northwest, the Isthmus of Panama connects South America with the North American continent. The overland border between the two continents stretches along the Colombia-Panama international boundary. The largest country by area and the most populated is Brazil, which occupies about 50% of the total mainland area, and more than 52% of the population lives on its territory. The smallest independent country is Suriname, which is the only nation in this region speaking Dutch as an official language. As for travel, the most visited among the South American countries are Brazil, Argentina, and Peru. The last one is the home of the region's most famous tourist attraction, Machu Picchu, the mysterious city of the Incas.

All 12 countries in South America in alphabetical order (as of June 2026)

A Argentina B Bolivia Brazil C Chile Colombia E Ecuador G Guyana P Paraguay Peru S Suriname U Uruguay V Venezuela

List of dependent territories of South America in alphabetical order

F Falkland Islands (UK) French Guiana (France) S South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (UK)

Discussion of NFHS Criteria

Timeliness & Durability

While its geographical proximity to the United States has kept South America relevant to US foreign policy for decades, recent developments make it a particularly ripe region for debate. The Trump administration's abduction of Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro (Department of War, 2026) raises new, timely concerns regarding US-South America policy. US credibility with South American governments is severely undermined by such an aggressive action (Chivvis & Stuenkel 2026, Brookings 2026). The US's 20 billion USD currency swap line with Argentina has connected the two economies in an unprecedented manner (Bianchi 2026, de Bolle 2025). US-Brazil trade has become fraught in the wake of President Trump's sweeping tariff policies. The historically productive relationship between the US and Colombia has suffered from disagreements between the Colombian and American administrations, and the incoming Trump-backed Colombian administration has opportunities to cooperate with the US in the areas of regional security, migration, counternarcotics, and trade (Marczak 2025, Wells 2026, Stuenkel & Feinberg 2026).

The United States appears unlikely to pursue any cooperative foreign policy with states who oppose its broader international aims. Even policies of engagement seem brittle and unreliable, as the governments willing to cooperate with the Trump administration usually court engagement from multiple major powers, as is the case with Argentina (Preve, 2026). Topical affirmatives that increase diplomatic and/or economic engagement with a target state are likely to be a departure from the administration's ongoing foreign policy.

Accessibility & Material

Accessibility of resolutions under this topic will be on par with other recent international topics. Students will need to learn about the governments of other countries and the important concepts in how states interact with one another. This topic is likely to require a significant amount of background research and general topic knowledge, as students will need to understand the political dynamics and institutions of multiple target countries in addition to the United States's foreign policy apparatus.

US Policy towards South America as a region and towards specific countries is the subject of significant policy analysis by major think tanks, consistently discussed by media outlets, and spans diverse issue areas. A range of materials of differing complexity will be easily accessible. Significant commentary on South America's geopolitical dynamics is published in the form of think tank pieces and op-eds, not just scholarly articles. This ensures that expert analysis is available to students without requiring them to learn all of the associated academic terminology at once.

While much of the media produced in target countries is primarily released in Spanish or Portuguese, the larger target countries' main media sources have English translations. Students will be able to rely on analysis of key issues from both US and target country publications.

Student Interest & Engagement

As has been the case with past topics focused on Latin America, the geographic proximity of South America contributes to a generally high level of baseline interest in this topic. While the continent of South America is less present in US media than, for example, Mexico, it maintains a degree of relevance that draws students' attention. This is complemented by the novelty of debates over South America – it is rare that students are afforded opportunities to engage with the complexity of the region in significant depth in either school or debate environments. The topic feels both relevant and new.

South America's regional dynamics span numerous international issues that students find engaging. Those with interests in big-picture IR and geopolitical dynamics will be drawn to Brazil's status as a regional power and the competitive dynamic between US and Chinese influence. Students interested in climate change, environmental conservation, and sustainability can focus on the importance of the Amazon rainforest, and the balance of economic and environmental incentives contributing to its preservation and destruction. Other regional political situations cover the international drug trade and the enforcement of laws across borders, global resource markets and developing industries, military presence and intervention, and migration flows. This topic presents a cross-section of the global issues that draw students to international topics and keep them interested.

Recent high-profile events have pushed South America into focus. The abduction of President Maduro was a surprising move that sparked lively discussion over US foreign policy in South America and the utility of military intervention in the region. The Trump administration's blanket tariffs were criticized in part for their application to Brazil and Chile, countries with which the United States had a trade surplus and a developing supply chain of critical minerals, respectively. Colombian President-elect Abelardo de la Espriella's campaign was supported by Donald Trump, leading to new headlines about US meddling in foreign elections. South America has increasingly become a core part of the national political conversation.

While the proposed topic is fairly broad, novice packet limitations will be sufficient to facilitate engagement by newer debaters. A hypothetical novice packet could be composed of:

Affirmative: cooperation over democratic reforms in Venezuela
Affirmative: investment in critical minerals like lithium in Argentina
Affirmative: removal of section 301 tariffs on Brazil
Disadvantage: BRICS Good
Disadvantage: China SOI
Disadvantage: Populism/Target country politics
Counterplan: BRICS
Kritik: Capitalism
Topicality

Educational Quality

International topics, especially those with a regional focus, should reward debaters for developing expertise regarding non-US countries' civic and political institutions in addition to the United States's foreign policy apparatus. Nearly all of the South American countries covered by this paper are experiencing domestic political change, where close elections will determine the direction of their foreign policy in the near future. The conservative trend in many South American governments has yet to be fully realized, and the inauguration of new administrations opens new possibilities for economic and diplomatic involvement with the United States.

As there is likely to be ongoing political change in target countries during the 2027-2028 season, students will watch the foreign civic institutions they have learned about change in real time. Debaters will be required to keep up with current events and adjust their arguments during the season. There is a wealth of high-quality policy analysis about South America, since most think tanks and international policy analysis firms have dedicated teams writing about the region. Students' updates will be able to cite highly qualified sources that respond to recent events within days of new policy developments.

Balance

South America is the subject of significant controversy in discussions of US foreign policy. The continent's salience as a foreign policy area should ensure that there is substantial literature surrounding diverse policy positions from different political ideologies. Affirmative teams will have ample ground to argue in favor of changes to the US's hemispheric strategy. The complex international implications of US policy will provide negative teams comparable ground to find disadvantages and counterplans against topical affirmatives.

While most of the proposed resolutions are broad in their inclusion of 12 countries, affirmative teams face clear constraints that make aff ground predictable. Firstly, affirmative cases will need a US key warrant. Most topical policy mechanisms – bilateral trade agreements, international investment, integration into international institutions, relationship-building – could realistically be actualized by non-US actors. Affirmative teams will need to access a US key warrant through advantage scenarios. The following subpoints will discuss two particularly promising advantage areas to this end.

A. Regional Partnerships. Donald Trump's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine – often called "Donroe"– has shifted the United States's strategy in the Western hemisphere towards unilateral, coercive policy justified by spheres-of-influence thinking. This doctrine has soured relationships with both established and prospective partners in South America, damaging the United States's trade position and diplomatic standing. Such a drastic shift from previous administrations' foreign policy strategies has been a uniquely destabilizing turn of events for regional powers. US action is key to address the impacts of this move, since only a shift in US policy can reasonably be expected to repair the US's image. A return to a strategy of engagement would be a significant departure from the status quo that could create sustainable partnerships with South American countries and facilitate access to trade, resources, and developing markets.

B. China. China's increasing influence in South America represents a superpower utilizing an engagement strategy to gain strategic regional footholds. This has directly traded off with US influence in the region as the Donroe doctrine has abandoned partnerships in South America. There is no non-US actor that can restore US strategic influence in the Western hemisphere. Affirmative teams can establish a clear US key argument by reading advantage scenarios about the geopolitical, diplomatic, economic, and military implications of China's strategic positioning in South America.

Secondly, the literature base limits the countries that could realistically be targets for topical engagement. There are few solvency advocates for bilateral cooperation with, for example Suriname – it is too small of a regional power for affirmatives to access significant impact scenarios or prove a US key warrant. Affirmative teams seeking to escape competition by targeting smaller countries will lack quality evidence and lose responses to core generics.

Third, no South American countries have nuclear weapons, constraining Aff impact scenarios. Affirmative teams will find little success crafting nuclear war scenarios based on regional nuclear terrorism, rogue states, or target country miscalculation. If affirmative teams seek to access impacts of this kind and scale, they will need to rely on the relatively predictable advantage ground of US-China competition and resulting escalation.

The affirmative's breadth advantage in its choice of target countries and policy mechanism is balanced by constraints on advantage and impact ground. Regional geopolitical dynamics involving China and BRICS present the negative with strong core generic disadvantages and counterplans, which the affirmative will need to counter with sufficiently large advantage scenarios that access US key warrants. Affirmative teams hoping to skirt a case debate will lose traction against topic generics.

Bibliography

Anderson, Scott et al. "The Global Implications of the US Military Operation in Venezuela." *Brookings*, 7 Jan. 2026, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-global-implications-of-the-us-military-operation-in-venezuela/.

Associated Press. "Trump Urges Latin American Leaders to Use Military to Help the U.S. Fight Cartels." *CNBC*, 7 Mar. 2026, https://www.cnbc.com/2026/03/07/trump-looks-to-turn-attention-to-western-hemisphere-at-least-for-a-moment-at-a-regional-summit.html.

Baer, Julie, et al. "A Partnership for Progress: Expanding U.S.-Brazil Student Exchange | CSIS." Center for Strategic and International Studies, 4 Apr. 2025, www.csis.org/analysis/partnership-progress-expanding-us-brazil-student-exchange.

Bianchi, Walter. "Argentina Has Repaid US for Currency Swap Deal." *Reuters*, 9 Jan. 2026, https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/argentina-has-repaid-us-currency-swap-deal-2026-01-09/ .

Britannica Editors. "List of Countries in Latin America." *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/topic/list-of-countries-in-Latin-America-2061416.

Cavanagh, Cameron. "Venezuela Sanctions: The U.S. Needs to Change Its Goals." *Georgetown Security Studies Review*, 21 Mar. 2023, https://gssr.georgetown.edu/the-forum/regions/americas/venezuela-sanctions-the-u-s-needs-to-change-its-goals/.

Chivvis, Christopher, and Oliver Stuenkel. "Does Trump Understand America's Real Interests in Venezuela?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 13 Jan. 2026, https://carnegieendowment.org/podcasts/pivotal-states-podcast/does-trump-understand-americas-real-interests-in-venezuela.

Council of Councils. "The World Reorders: The Complications of a Return to Spheres of Influence - Council of Councils." *Council on Foreign Relations*, 30 Jan. 2026, https://www.cfr.org/councilofcouncils/global-memo/the-world-reorders-the-complications-of-a-return-to-spheres-of-influence/, https://www.cfr.org/councilofcouncils/global-memo/the-world-reorders-the-complications-of-a-return-to-spheres-of-influence/.

Council on Foreign Relations. "Modern History and U.S. Foreign Policy: The Americas | CFR Education." Council on Foreign Relations, 8 May 2025, education.cfr.org/learn/reading/modern-history-and-us-foreign-policy-americas.

Council on Foreign Relations. "Regional Politics: The Americas | CFR Education." Council on Foreign Relations, 8 May 2025, education.cfr.org/learn/reading/regional-politics-americas.

Countries of the World. "List of Countries in South America in Alphabetical Order." Countries of the World, www.countries-ofthe-world.com/countries-of-south-america.html. Accessed 26 June 2026.

de Bolle, Monica. "Will Argentina Become Trump's Financial Quagmire?" *PIIE*, 16 Oct. 2025, https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economics/2025/will-argentina-become-trumps-financial-quagmire .

Definition of TOWARD. 12 Apr. 2026, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/toward.

Definition of WITH. 11 Apr. 2026, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/with.

Definition of WITH. 11 Apr. 2026, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/with.

Department of State. “FY 2026 Congressional Budget Justification.” United States Department of State, 2025, www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FY-2026-State-CBJ-.pdf.
Department of State. “U.S. Department of State Fiscal Year 2025 Agency Financial Report.” United States Department of State, Dec. 2025, www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/DOS-AFR-2025-508.pdf.
Dib, Laura Cristina. “Two Months without Maduro in Venezuela: Democratic Transition or Authoritarian Adaptation? - Wola.” Washington Office on Latin America, 11 Mar. 2026, www.wola.org/analysis/two-months-without-maduro-in-venezuela-democratic-transition-or-authoritarian-adaptation/.
Dworkin, Anthony, et al. “After the Rupture: Middle Powers and the Construction of New Order – European Council on Foreign Relations.” *ECFR*, 12 Feb. 2026, https://ecfr.eu/publication/after-the-rupture-middle-powers-and-the-construction-of-new-order/.
Ellis, Evan. “Leveraging Latin America’s Embrace of the United States | CSIS.” Center for Strategic and International Studies, 4 Nov. 2025, www.csis.org/analysis/leveraging-latin-americas-embrace-united-states.
Evans, Alex, and David Steven. “TOWARDS A THEORY OF INFLUENCE FOR TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY FOREIGN POLICY: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD.” Engagement: Public Diplomacy in a Globalised World, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 2008.
Galston, William, et al. “Redrawing Global Boundaries? The United States, China, and the Viability of Spheres of Influence in the 21st Century.” *Brookings*, 18 Feb. 2026, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/redrawing-global-boundaries-the-united-states-china-and-the-viability-of-spheres-of-influence-in-the-21st-century/.
Grabow, Colin. “The EU-Mercosur Deal Shows What the US Is Leaving Behind.” *Cato Institute*, 28 Jan. 2026, https://www.cato.org/commentary/eu-mercosur-deal-shows-what-us-leaving-behind.
Guimaraes, Thayz. “Trump’s Tariffs Are Giving Lula a Boost and Shifting Brazil’s Geopolitics.” *Atlantic Council*, 6 Aug. 2025, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/trumps-tariffs-are-giving-lula-a-boost-and-shifting-brazils-geopolitics/.
Harrison, Chase, and Khalea Robertson. “Trump in Latin America: Brazil Hit with Tariffs and Terrorist Designations | AS/COA.” AS/COA Americas Society Council of the Americas, 3 June 2026, www.as-coa.org/articles/trump-latin-america-brazil-hit-tariffs-and-terrorist-designations.
Heine, Jorge. “Brazil, the BRICS and Active Non-Alignment.” *CEBRI Revista*, 2025, https://cebri.org/revista/en/artigo/202/brazil-the-brics-and-active-non-alignment.
Huberman, Bruno, and Rodrigo Augusto Duarte Amaral. “Hegemony and resistance: US imperial strategies in Latin America and the Middle East after the Cold War.” Middle East Critique, vol. 34, no. 4, 2 Oct. 2025, pp. 581–606, https://doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2025.2578046.
Lowenthal, Abraham. “Disaggregating Latin America: Diverse Trajectories, Emerging Clusters and Their Implications.” *Brookings*, 1 Nov. 2011, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/disaggregating-latin-america-diverse-trajectories-emerging-clusters-and-their-implications/.
Marczak, Jason. “With Petro and Trump at Odds, What’s next for the US-Colombia Relationship?” *Atlantic Council*, 23 Oct. 2025, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/with-petro-and-trump-at-odds-whats-next-for-the-us-colombia-relationship/.

Office of the Historian. “Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations - Office of the Historian.” Office of the Historian, United States Department of State, history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/monroe. Accessed 26 June 2026.
Office of the Historian. “Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, 1904.” Office of the Historian, United States Department of State, history.state.gov/milestones/1899-1913/roosevelt-and-monroe-doctrine. Accessed 26 June 2026.
Olay, Matthew. “Trump Announces U.S. Military’s Capture of Maduro.” *US Department of War*, 3 Jan. 2026, https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4370431/trump-announces-us-militarys-capture-of-maduro/.
Patterson, Rebecca. “How the World Is Seeing the United States as 2026 Begins | Council on Foreign Relations.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 23 Jan. 2026, https://www.cfr.org/articles/how-the-world-is-seeing-the-united-states-as-2026-begins.
Preve, Clara. “Argentina’s Milei Heads to the US Again, Balancing Trump Ties with Growing China Trade.” *AP News*, 18 Feb. 2026, https://apnews.com/article/argentina-milei-us-trump-china-b23f8bc5ffd461f17e395b786cbf896b.
Puglierin, Anthony Dworkin, Rafael Loss, Jana. “After the Rupture: Middle Powers and the Construction of New Order – European Council on Foreign Relations.” *ECFR*, 12 Feb. 2026, https://ecfr.eu/publication/after-the-rupture-middle-powers-and-the-construction-of-new-order/.
Ramcilovic-Suominen, Sabaheta. “Capitalism as Colonialism as Capitalism (and the Alternatives).” Retheorising Capitalism, Tampere University Press, Tampere, Finland, 2025, pp. 198–218.
Ramsey, Geoff. “Updating the Democratic Transition Framework to Chart a Way Forward in Venezuela - Atlantic Council.” Atlantic Council, 15 June 2026, www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/democratic-transition-framework-chart-forward-venezuela/.
Reid, Michael. “Latin America’s Rightward Shift.” *Americas Quarterly*, 13 May 2025, https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/latin-americas-rightward-shift/.
Resnick, Evan. “Defining Engagement.” *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 54, no. 2.
Roy, Diana. “China’s Growing Influence in Latin America.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 6 June 2025, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/china-influence-latin-america-argentina-brazil-venezuela-security-energy-bri.
Runde, Daniel F, et al. “Renewing U.S. Economic Engagement with the Developing World.” Center for Strategic and International Studies, Nov. 2018, csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190820_RundeBanduraMurphy_USEconomyEngagementDevelopingWorld_v5.pdf.
Sheen, Seongho. “US Strategy of Engagement During the Cold War and Its Implication for Sunshine Policy.” *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, XIV, no. 1, https://www.kida.re.kr/data/2006/04/14/seongho_sheen.pdf.
Smith, Evan. “Tariffs on Brazil Are Really Taxes on Americans - Publications - National Taxpayers Union.” National Taxpayers Union, 22 June 2026, www.ntu.org/publications/detail/tariffs-on-brazil-are-really-taxes-on-americans.
Solar, Carlos. “Critical Minerals and the US–China Rivalry in South America.” *RUSI*, 1 Aug. 2025, https://www.rusi.orghttps://www.rusi.org.
Stuenkel, Oliver, and Adrian Feinberg. “Trump Can Play Kingmaker in Latin America. He Can’t Build Lasting Influence.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 25 June 2026,

carnegieendowment.org/emissary/2026/06/colombia-election-trump-kingmaker-influence-latin-america.
Wallin, Matthew. “Engagement: What Does It Mean for Public Diplomacy?” American Security Project, 11 June 2013, www.americansecurityproject.org/engagement-what-does-it-mean-for-public-diplomacy/.
Walt, Stephen M. *The Predatory Hegemon | Foreign Affairs*. 3 Feb. 2026, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/predatory-hegemon-walt.
Wells, Ione. “Colombia Sees ‘real Threat’ of US Military Action, President Tells BBC.” *BBC*, 9 Jan. 2026, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwygjvkvpgro.
Winter, Brian. *Latin America’s Revolution of the Right | Foreign Affairs*. 16 Dec. 2025, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/south-america/revolution-right-brian-winter.
World Bank. “GDP (Current US$) - Latin America & Caribbean | Data.” World Bank Group, data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=ZJ&most_recent_value_desc=true. Accessed 26 June 2026.

Key Organizations & Interest Groups:

Atlantic Council

Brookings Institute

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Center for Strategic & International Studies

Council on Foreign Relations

Peterson Institute for International Economics

Washington Office on Latin America

Appendix: Leaders & Election Dates

Country	**Current Head of State**	**Next Election**
Argentina	Milei	October 24, 2027
Bolivia	Paz	2030
Brazil	Lula	October 4, 2026
Chile	Kast	November 18, 2029
Colombia	Petro (Aug. 4 de la Espriella)	2030 (June 2026)
Ecuador	Noboa	2029
Guyana	Ali	2030
Paraguay	Peña	2028
Peru	Balcazar (Jul. 28 Fujimori)	April 12, 2026
Suriname	Geerlings-Simons	2030
Uruguay	Orsi	October 28, 2029
Venezuela	Maduro / Rodriguez	2030